

DAVIS (Miss P. B.)

TWO YEARS AND THREE MONTHS  
IN THE  
NEW YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM,  
AT UTICA;

TOGETHER WITH THE OUTLINES OF  
TWENTY YEARS' PEREGRINATIONS IN SYRACUSE.

By MISS PHEBE B. DAVIS,  
FORMERLY OF BARNARD, WINDSOR COUNTY, VERMONT.

SYRACUSE:  
PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR.

1855.



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NEW YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM

AT TEST

THE NEW YORK LUNATIC ASYLUM

BY JOHN EDWIN H. HAYES

BY HAYES  
PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR

Miss Annie Wallace,  
With the respects of  
The Author.

SYRACUSE, Feb. 6, 1855.

THE bearer of this note—Miss Phebe Davis—has been an acquaintance of ours for the last fourteen years.

Her character for a conscientious determination to do right, in all circumstances, may be depended upon.

Her health is her apology for offering this book to the public; she hopes that the avails will give her the means of support.

She seems, also, to have a strong desire to benefit the condition of those who have been afflicted with her.

GROVE LAWRENCE,

THOS. A. SMITH,

O. R. STRONG,

JOS. F. SABINE,

H. BALDWIN,

MRS. GROVE LAWRENCE,

CHARLOTTE E. L. SMITH,

A. B. SHIPMAN, M. D.

D. COATS,

M. D. BURNET,

B. D. NOXON





## PREFACE.

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I WAS an inmate of the Utica Lunatic Asylum about two years and three months, and I am sensible that community in general are ignorant of the manner in which that Institution is conducted. I do not feel myself qualified to write an interesting work upon the subject, but I design to give as correct information as possible in regard to the proceedings of that house. This is a duty I owe to the world. I find that community have no definite knowledge of what occurs in that Asylum.

P. B. D.

PREFACE

I was an inmate of the Essex Lunatic Asylum about two years and three months, and I am convinced that the community in general are ignorant of the manner in which that institution is conducted. I do not feel myself qualified to write an interesting work upon the subject, but I design to give as correct information as possible in regard to the proceedings of that house. This is a duty I owe to the world. I find that communities have no definite knowledge of what occurs in that Asylum.

R. R. R.



## NARRATIVE.

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I WAS born and brought up in the State of Vermont, Windsor county, and town of Barnard, and emigrated to Syracuse in 1834; and every scholar will readily know that Vermont young ladies had an introduction to the kitchen before they were considered capable of filling any other sphere in life. My days of childhood were occupied in going to a small district school, and a portion of my time was devoted to the care of domestic fowls, such as geese, goslings and chickens; and also a few yards of cloth, made of flax, received a little attention by the way of bleaching it on the grass by the brook. We all found it necessary to apply ourselves to manual labor, and consequently we had much less time to devote to superficial appearances than many who think themselves more highly favored, simply because they can indulge in indolent habits, much more so in the western world than in the eastern States.

When I was a child my father was able to make ample provision for his family, and his children knew nothing of suffering, nor want, nor begging; but we were all brought up to think it was a sin to be idle, and when I was not otherwise employed, I spent my time in exploring the soil I was born and brought up on. I was very happy in examining the bowels of old mother earth, for the purpose of ascertaining what she yielded that would contribute to my benefit. I was familiar with every root, herb and bark that the farm yielded, and their medicinal qualities, and tag-alder not excepted. Mullein and burdock were also on the list. My father had an orchard on the farm that was five acres square, surrounded by a single stone wall, which was made by my grandfather, and I thought it almost an unpardonable sin to find a stone off that wall and not put it back again, because I was brought up to venerate my grandfather and respect all his deeds, and they were worthy of respect from every one who knew him.

Nearly every tree in that orchard had a name, and the trees were not exactly known by their fruit, but more by their names. Each cow had a name, and each young one had a name; but I think there must have been a scarcity of names after supplying as numerous a family as we were. And there are plenty of us, such as we are, and we all took just such heads as Deity had to spare when He created us, and if He created them in His own image, how can the world make a person responsible for the crime of being created honest, when God created him, and we all know that God was never guilty of a dishonest act in all His life? My father would be called a criminal here in this mongrel state of society, for he is an honest man, and always was, and I never took a lesson on duplicity in my life until I took it from the fashionable society in Syracuse. I had no more knowledge of what the world calls high life than a cedar stump or root, and I wish I was as ignorant of it now; but I came here in an unsophisticated state of mind, as much so as the most of children three years of age.

My father lost his property, and I was thrown upon my own resources, and being spiced a little with the spirit of enterprise, I thought I would emigrate as far west as Onondaga county, for I believe that I never before had been out of the county that I was born and brought up in. I had a few relatives in and about Syracuse, and I thought I had started out on a great enterprise; but all this time I had the mantua-making trade in view, and after spending a few months with my relatives, I succeeded in securing a situation in a shop superintended by Miss Susan Hough, a very competent milliner and dress-maker, and also a very respectable person. I stopped with her fifteen months, and in that back shop I took my first lessons in human nature. She seldom asked me to wait on the front shop, because my sewing was worth more to her than the help of those who could wait on the shop, and it was very seldom that I got any exercise except with my brain and fingers, and my brain was listening to the fashionable chit-chat of the first circle of Syracuse. I thought that if I had got to learn all of that fashionable lingo, I never should be anybody in the world, but that was what I started for, and I am very much determined in my purposes. I never liked to put my hand to the plow and look back, and I persevere until I accom-

plish all that I started for, and more if possible. I have made out to find that it is circumstances that develop character, and if that is a law of nature, who is to blame for the variety of opinions? The eastern States were settled mostly by the English, and a long time before New York State was acquainted with any inhabitants except the Indians, and after awhile the Dutch made their appearance; but the eastern and western States, being settled by different nations, afford a very different state of society. There are but few foreigners in the eastern States compared with what there are in the western world. There is more of a sameness in society through the eastern States than through the western; and the phrenological developments of the eastern people are altogether different from the western heads. Take them as they rise, and their natural feelings and characters are as different as their heads; and what I have seen is enough to make out rather a heterogeneous world so far. If I could have had a foreknowledge of things and people, and the privilege of selecting my own organization and head with the rest, I am sure that I should have taken a very different set of bumps. I should have rummaged all over for the meanest head that the Lord had on hand, for such a head is far better appreciated in a community than a person of superior qualities. But we are only chips out of the great block of Nature. Sometimes I think there was a little lack of good taste on the part of Deity, being the author of a person just like myself; and it must be that He was a little short of nerves about that time, and had to spin my own rather finer than usual. I am not fond of such finery that is not tangible. It is worse than doing penance for some awful crime. Who cares for it? No one.

I was crowded into this world without my consent, a poor miserable piece of original mechanism, and I am compelled to stop here destitute of means of support and health, and my nervous system destroyed by overdoing and ill-treatment but the most of it has been done by premeditated evil. If the Syracuseans had been as much devoted to good as they have been to evil, there would have been something left of me in these days; but I presume they think there is enough of me left yet, judging from the gossip that I afford them; and it is rather a pleasure to know that I am a personage capable of affording thirty thousand inhabitants with gossiping topics;

they seem to know that I am superior to themselves, and I know it too. It is only their superiors who call out these envious feelings. A tree that has good fruit on it will be known by the clubs under it.

I hope the reader will excuse my egotism ; but I consider it a great misfortune for a female who is thrown upon her own resources to be intellectual, for my misfortune has been my crime. A young gentleman in indigent circumstances will meet with far better encouragement in the world than a young lady, for men will always assist each other ; but it is not often they will assist an intellectual woman ; and if the ladies would do as much for each other as they will for the gentlemen, there would not be so many abandoned females in the world as there are at this present time, for I think that seven out of ten such will tell the world that it was the inhumanity of their own sex that destroyed them. They will always hate the women, and I can very readily appreciate the cause of it from what they have caused me to suffer. The sight of one of the amiable women in Syracuse is perfectly disgusting to my eyes ; but it is a leading trait of character of the American ladies to backbite each other and slander all the law will allow them. It appears to be the strongest motive, as low as it is. It has been pell mell about myself in Syracuse for fifteen years. I am now on the upper shelf, and still think of remaining there, the women not having exactly driven me to degradation, as they expected ; and if I am a little impious, there are a great many of the gentry who are more so. I learned profanity from the pulpits in Syracuse, and I have a right to use the same language that the ministers do. If there is any efficacy in strong words, I have much more use for them than the priests have. They are a class of men who know nothing of the ills of life ; they speak, and lo ! they are obeyed. What do such men and women know of the vicissitudes of life ? They are only great babies ; they will whine around the women with a little, small, pious dish of conversation about their souls, when it is not more than one in ten who has got such an article as a soul, or ever had or ever will have ; and what few there are who had the good luck to draw a prize instead of a blank, will strike out a path for themselves independent of priest-craft guide boards. Their agency costs community or the working class quite too much for the benefit of society. It does not realt



pay the cost in these days. I think that my soul has not half as good a reputation in Heaven as it had previous to my acquaintance with so many of the ministers and fashionable women. I think it proper to class them together, although there are a few exceptions in both classes. I wish to be just in every respect. The few friends who have been real friends for fifteen years past were members of the Presbyterian Church, and during that time I have received more benefits from professors of religion than from any other class of people in the place; but they were of the most intelligent families that Syracuse affords. They are capable of appreciating my motives; but they understood phrenology to start with; they made that their starting point, and by their influence I became interested in the science. I have made it my point of compass from that time to this, or otherwise I should have gone to the shades long ago. In my poverty I have made it my study to select the bright spots, and with the assistance of my friends I have kept my head balanced after a fashion. It appears that God favored me in that respect, for O. S. Fowler made me out a very well balanced head. Although I am distinguished for my ugliness, Mr. Fowler did not discover the bad bumps until I told him just how ugly I was; but I can find plenty of others who are quite as rabid as myself. I know that my moral feelings are rather perverted, but if the morality had not been there, there certainly could not be a general perversion of the moral organs, for it is very seldom that I see a low moral head become misanthropic. Such a mind will best relish what will soon destroy a person who has a very high moral head.

I take the liberty to speak for myself, for I wish this work to have an extensive circulation, and therefore I desire people to know cause and effect.

I was born of intellectual parents, and the ministers and women are mad about it—I mean the majority of both classes; and the great secret is, they cannot make their superficial religion fit my skull. The ministers have dropped me long ago, but the women still continue to throw out their hot lava, with the assistance of Priest May. I forgot him for a moment, but I understand that he is always ready to back and bolster the women in their discussions on my case. Mr. May, I think, must be of Irish origin, for May is an Irish name; but fashionable blarney is not altogether confined to the Irish. We

have great, smooth-tongued folks in these days, who make use of smooth language for vile purposes, and such people conceal their motives by adopting that course. People are always dupes to such men and women, except the few, and the few are a shooting mark for the many. Corrupt persons invariably envelope their motives deeply in the present system of education, and that class of people have much more influence yet than one honest person. The whole civilized world has become involved in iniquity under such influences. The working class overwork and underthink, and they do not take time to discriminate between fashionable language and philosophical facts. There is a broad difference between language and ideas. The world must learn to do their own thinking. Folks in general do not live deep enough. Ministers can talk about religion, but I wish I could see one who lived it. If there were as many Christians in this world as there are ministers, the world would never have been so deeply steeped in iniquity as it is at this present time. We have had theoretical religion, but practical religion has only a name left, and that is merely used as a by-word. I do not want to call people ignoramuses, but what shall I call them, except by their right name?

I am sensible that my own merits were few and far between to start with; but to be honest, I think they have been rather retrograding ever since I came to Syracuse, and I have spent the most of my time with fashionable professors of religion. I was principally employed by that class of people, and at that time, as a good dress-maker was rather a scarce article, I was not long out of employment. I did not know anything of the laws of health; and at the end of five years after I reached Syracuse, I found my physical system perfectly prostrated. I had become melancholy and misanthropic. Such a state of things was new to me, and not only new, but the whole state of affairs was a mystery. Previous to the melancholy state my brain had been quite too active; and when a reaction took place, then the mind was clouded in, and all was dark. There was not as much as one bright spot left. My temperament is the nervous, and almost purely so. I believe I was a little spiced with the billious at first—but it is all worn out, and the nervous is also worn threadbare.

When I first had the blues, I thought of John Bunyan's Slough of Despond, and how to get out was the next thing.



"But melancholy is the telescope of truth," and I felt just like making a recluse of myself, and devoting my time to straining out facts. Where to begin, I knew not; but I could not let the matter rest. At length I made an effort to digest what little I had selected in Syracuse, and added what little I carried there with it. I looked it over, and saw it was all nothing; but the strongest motive was to analyze the state of society. I had a great many friends in the place, and they were all willing to do everything they could for me—but they were as ignorant of mind as myself. I could see almost into futurity, and I discovered that sectarianism was not the thing for me, nor no one else but the corrupt. They were all very kind until they discovered that I never was blocked out for a sectarian, for I had no motives to conceal.

When I was obliged to trace the origin of many of the ladies in Syracuse, I did not think it strange that I should become misanthropic under their influences; they are the kind who hate purity. A pure-minded person is perfectly repulsive to the vicious, and two such persons suffer in each other's society. The feelings of the two individuals repel each other, for there is no natural affinity in the individuals for each other's society. It is similarity of feeling that produces union. That is a law of nature; and when I looked at society as it was then and as it is now, I thought I could not live in this world at all, for I had nothing but my clothes, and nothing to look forward to but insanity. It was an awful thought to know that it was hereditary, and a mountain of ideas rushed upon my already over-exercised brain. What disposal to make of my case yet remained a mystery. To think of the past was no consolation—the present was a double aggravation, and the future was as doleful as a funeral procession. The pious folks said that I was under conviction, serious or supernatural, one or the other, or both; but the name is nothing. Facts are facts, independent of names, and whatever delusion my feelings had selected was reality to me at that time. Delusion will fasten upon these nervous diseases, and there is a very nice idea in the arrangement that is worthy of note. With such a person, or a very nervous person, when the mind does select a delusion, it is sure to aim at something that is calculated to make the person the most wretched of anything on earth. This one fact I took particular notice of in the insane institution, and my

own experience and observation have qualified me for a charitable being in almost every respect, especially where there is a predisposition to insanity in a person's nature; for I believe that one lesson of personal experience is worth fifty lessons in theory or by observation of others.

As far as the human mind is concerned, and as far as my experience is worth anything to the mental sufferers in this world, I am willing they should have the benefit of it, and I hope it will not be lost to them, for there always have been mental sufferers in the world who suffer from causes that physicians in general do not comprehend, because it is not in their natures to suffer in the same way, or from similar causes; and my experience has told me that no one can know what to do for or to say to a person whose feelings are affected, except one of a similar nature.

I should have been under the sod years ago if it had not been for two ladies in Syracuse; but their sympathy has been the sanative for fourteen years past. The inferior classes in the place have called me crazy, and that has been rather an advantage to me, for I can say just what I wish at any time to them. I am sure to take them when it will mortify them the most, and in that way they are still in my presence, for I am careful to select such as they do not wish to hear, and they have the same privilege; but they prefer to do their talking in my absence. They call themselves rational, and during my twenty years' peregrinations in Syracuse, they cannot tell me of anything I have done that I will attempt to deny. I am perfectly willing to acknowledge the crimes I have been guilty of committing through all my insanity, for I profess to know my own business as yet. The fact is, we are all subject to circumstances, and are crowded along by the force of the same from one set to another; consequently we sometimes do things that are or should be called involuntary acts, and are done more from necessity than choice. Organization and situation are before education. I did not have the privilege of selecting my organization; I did not choose my parentage; neither did I select my mother feelings the first nine months of my existence; nor did I choose the place of my birth, or assist in arranging the state of society in which I was born. I had no power to select my education, and I had no control over circumstances before my birth; neither have I ever had the power to control circumstances that

have made me what I am. They have dabbled with me about what they call religion until they are obliged to flat on their own theory, and acknowledge that I am not crazy, nor never was during the warfare, for they all begin to see there is no philosophy in priest-craft.

The different sciences are gradually taking place of sectarianism. The knowledge of God will cover the earth yet, for His work will stand; but the work of man will come to naught. The most heads are so full of rubbish that they hardly know where to begin themselves. Scientific knowledge is a progressive work of time—sectarianism is the governing influence, because it is the strongest.

I believe that religion has governed the politics of all countries so far; but look at the consequences. There are only the few who notice results. A person of exalted pursuits is ever the theme of censure or of praise. It is in such persons that the nature of the human mind is exhibited.

Some close observer has said that no one has so good a right to speak of the faults of society as those who have suffered by them; and of course I have paid dear for my license to deal out facts. I think that I am entitled to a legal grant to indulge in them after this. The grant was given me as a voluntary act by the amiables of Syracuse, and they should not give me anything that I cannot make useful. We should first observe facts, then compare them, and perhaps we may discover causes; for every philosophical mind will readily admit that evils must be prevented in their causes, and not palliated in their effects.

The human mind was never made to be idle. Thought emanates from Deity, and no man can measure it out. We must act, or we shall be annihilated among the forces around us and against us. In tracing cause and effect, we see that every person will yield to the strongest motive that presents itself; and if the moral standard of society is so low that vice is the strongest motive, who is to blame? I do not consider there is any merit in one person being better than another, nor any blame on the part of the individual who is made accountable for crime. Such people are unfortunately organized or educated. A mother often stamps the destiny of her child in its character previous to its birth. It is a hereditary law in nature. Ignorance is the evil in this world, and knowledge is

the only remedy; but there is a ray of light yet, although dim. "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not; but it never will be extinguished. There is too much intellect in this generation. True greatness has seldom ever had its place in this world, for such are not appreciated while living. A great mind is a great while finding its place, and a person who possesses true greatness and true goodness with it, never will find a place fit for two such qualifications in the same person, in the present state of society; for money has always been a substitute for merit, and those who have the most merit generally have the least money. A person of real merit can enjoy himself with less means than those who depend altogether upon money for their reputation. Such have no internal sources of enjoyment, and a vacant mind will seek the same. There are supplies for all, although the honest endeavors of females who are thrown upon their own resources have seldom been appreciated or recognized, unless they are qualified to mingle with the vulgar circle of society, which is the fashionable class. It is the fashionables who give tone to society; and where do we see vulgarity but in high life? There is where I took my first lessons. But verily, verily I say unto you in the nineteenth century, there are new but great developments, and those who have eyes must see, and those who have ears to hear let them hear Mr. May talk of women's rights, for he is truly an admirable creature, and perfectly amiable and interesting to some people. I suppose that Horace Mann has told the Reverend that women have got brains, and that fact affords him a great enterprise and something new. He is really advocating women's rights, but if I am not mistaken, he claims the privilege of striking out the path of righteousness for them. That will do for such as have heads equally low as his own; but I fear another development will intercept his motives. I have discovered that his head was too low to dictate to such as have a high tone of moral refinement, and such as act from conscientious motives. The "old skeezicks" claims to be a great philanthropist, but he is mistaken in his motives. He is not, neither was he ever, blocked out for one. He is a great blarneyist. When the world are all properly educated, and each one's powers of mind properly understood, then people will be capable of ascertaining who will be qualified to fill the different offices; and then each and every one can

claim his or her proper place in the community. We have the pleasure of knowing, by long experience, that we cannot legislate community into good morals. We are convinced of the fact that a priest-ridden community must be restrained by legislative government. There will eventually be a different state of things. Fashionable society are rather running behind their own ticket. This influence is growing less, and will continue to do so if the working class will inform their minds, for knowledge is power. My interest and my associations have always been with the working class, and always will be.

My religion will not furnish me a fashionable living in this place, but Mr. May's will, because the women think so much more of him than they do of me.

Horace Mann has discovered the difference between high life and a high woman. The ladies will bear that from a gentleman; but I should pity the female who would take the liberty to publish that fact. We do know that mothers mould the characters of their children much more than their fathers; and I should think it would be a pleasant spectacle to parents to take a survey of the present state of society.

I believe that God is the owner of about thirty buildings in the city of Syracuse; but there are more houses of correction in the city than there are Christians. I believe there never has a reformation commenced in a church yet here. We have a Court House and a Penitentiary, a County House and a Work House, a State Prison and a Watch House, a Police Office and a Hospital, and an Insane Institution, all in the neighborhood of each other; for by two hours' travel we can reach either of them; and now and then a seraglio, and misery multiplied by the use of ardent spirits; but still the church-going propensity continues as an epidemic. The ministers do see that their own works follow them.

"A man convinced against his will  
Is of the same opinion still."

It is fear that makes our demons, and weak hope our gods.

The wrongs of which I have spoken must all be made right. They cannot at present, for the social condition of society is wrong, and it must be regulated—but not until every human being is recognized as a human being. Place any individual in the world where he is not respected by those with whom he



is obliged to associate, and he will very soon lose his self-respect. It is a law in nature, and that is the reason why so many of the high order of American females become reckless. We cannot make outcasts of such.

"Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

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"Man's inhumanity to man makes countless millions mourn."

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I have given simply the outlines of what took me to the Lunatic Asylum. S. J. May, the great woman's rights man of Syracuse, pretended that he thought it would be a great benefit to my health; yet he knew all the time that I could take care of myself, if I had anything to do it with,—and that is more than his women-folk can do, though they are rational, I suppose—for they will not cook their own food after it is given them, while I was obliged to work for what little I did have and then do my own cooking besides. But, however, as I could not make a comfortable living by sewing, I thought it best to go, and the more readily, as I had heard so much said in commendation of the institution and of the kind treatment that patients received there. Still, notwithstanding all these good hear-says, as soon as I thought of going there, a feeling of suspicion crept into my mind, which I could not eradicate and did not, that all was not right in that Asylum, and this impression proved to be too true—it was not imaginary, but real. Mr. James R. Lawrence made out the order, which fell into the hands of Mr. William Gardner, the High Sheriff of Onondaga County at that time. Old Priest May was officious as usual. I think the law requires that two reliable physicians shall adjudge a person insane before sending the person to a Lunatic Asylum. Who were the "reliable physicians" that were called upon to declare my insanity I do not know nor I do not care, and I never inquired. Neither did I know that Mr. Gardner held the order in reference to me until he had been possessed of it several weeks. I had a few friends in the country, and I was spending a few weeks with them, enjoying myself very well; when I returned to Syracuse, Professor Spencer was delivering a course of lectures at Malcolm Hall on the Philosophy of Mind, and, one or two gentlemen handing



me a few tickets, I found my way into the Lecture room. About that time I was one day walking out for the benefit of my health, when I met some one on the street who informed me of the fact that Mr. Gardner had an order for my commitment to the Asylum, and that he could not find me; he had never seen me—having then but recently moved into the place, on being elected to the office of Sheriff. I was informed that old Priest May and some of his offspring were trying to create an excitement by disseminating the idea that I was a very dangerous person in the community; but it proved a failure, for if it had been the case, others would have found it out without Priest May's information on the subject; for with it they were not any wiser, though they probably derived as much benefit from that information as they generally do from his teachings, as he is always harping upon some low subject or other, keeping up a low hue and cry; and that is why he has so many followers, for it is just what suits the women, especially if it be about myself. Well, on hearing the news that I was to go to the crazy house, I made calculations accordingly, and indeed was obliged to make them all myself, as though I were considered a rational person. I was in hopes they would make some preparation for me, the same as is usually done for other crazy people, and certainly if they wished me to go in haste for the sake of the city's peace. But none appeared to make arrangements for me, or to ascertain whether I was properly provided with clothing or other things. It would seem they thought me a very capable crazy person. Previous to this I had been endeavoring to keep house, but could not pay the expenses, and had been obliged to sell clothing to get furniture. On learning the news that I was to go to the Asylum, I immediately set about the disposal of my little stock of furniture and provide myself again with clothing. Exchange is no robbery, although sometimes there is robbery in exchange. I succeeded in selling or exchanging to pretty good advantage, without taking things to auction; of course there was some sacrifice, but I was perfectly satisfied—realizing about sixteen dollars, with which I made my "fashionable fall purchases," the avails of my cooking stove providing me with a shawl. How odd, that a lunatic woman should be allowed and even obliged thus to transact business for herself! I dealt with Mr. Titus who was at that time in mercantile business on Salina

street, and who treated me as though he considered me a lady of some taste and judgment and politeness; I have always found Mr. Titus very much of a gentleman. Having made the best of what I had to make it of and with, I then went to work washing and ironing my clothes, and packing in one trunk such as I chose to take with me to Utica, leaving the remainder all clean and in good order in another trunk.

When I had accomplished all my domestic arrangements, I called at the office of Mr. Gardner, to inform him that I was ready to wait on him to Utica. Mr. Gardner was absent on business at Oswego, but there was a gentleman in the office who was very polite, and who said that I could leave my errand with him, which I did, telling him also that if Mr. Gardner did not appear soon I should have to rave again, as I had no claims upon any one for a meal of victuals or a night's lodging, for while I had been making preparation for Utica I paid my board by letting the woman where I was at the time have a domestic shawl that had been given me as a present, and the man of the house appeared rather dissatisfied with the bargain before I could get ready, (and I presume that I did consume the value of the shawl two or three times over,) but I told him to keep cool, and perhaps I would pay my board bill when I got rational.

The morning after my call at Mr. Gardner's office, that gentleman came round to see the strange mortal, and I appeared with my regimentals all ready for Utica; he said he would call again about one o'clock with a carriage to take my trunk and self to the depot, which promise was fulfilled, and in due time we arrived at the depot—Mr. Gardner finding himself still alive; a man stood ready to take the horse by the bit, for the Syracuse rubbish had informed Mr. Gardner of my interesting traits of character; but he was too much of a gentleman to believe it without occasion, and of course no difficulty occurred. We soon found ourselves in Utica, and a horse and carriage were speedily ordered out to convey us to the Asylum, which we reached in a few minutes. I told Mr. Gardner that I would do my best when I went into the house, and perhaps they would not find out that I was crazy. He rang the bell, and Dr. Porter waited on the door and conducted us to the state parlor, which is a public parlor, where the Doctors see all patients and strangers that come. I felt rather silly.

Mr. Gardner told Dr. Porter that he had a lady with him that he wished to leave there, and desired to see Dr. Benedict Behold, Dr. Benedict appeared, and Mr. Gardner gave me an introduction to the Superintendent of the Lunatic Asylum. No one could be more bland than the Doctor; he was a perfect specimen of amiability, and all was very pleasant; the surface was as smooth as glass. The Doctor soon inquired as to the state of my health, and I told him that I considered it good, with the exception of weak nerves; he remarked that we did not always know ourselves; I told him I thought I had a very good knowledge of myself; he then said that we could not always control ourselves, and asked if I would sit there a short time with the Matron, to which I answered in the affirmative, and he, with Mr. Gardner, then withdrew. After an absence of ten or fifteen minutes, they returned, the Doctor with a sheet of paper in his hand; he asked me to take a seat by a table, which I did—occupying one side of the table, while Mr. Gardner occupied another and the Superintendent had the other two to himself. He then said, “Come, now tell us all about yourself.” I said that I would tell him what little I knew. He then commenced asking me questions, which were answered, and he remarked to Mr. Gardner that he thought I had told the truth. He did certainly ask a variety of questions, but perhaps none that were unnecessary; but before he got through taking notes, I came to the conclusion that he must be a Yankee, for I found myself completely exhausted. At the conclusion of this examination, Mr. Gardner left.

Dr. Benedict now asked me to give him the key to my trunk, and I complied. The trunk had been accidentally put into the Albany baggage car, and gone on to that city; Mr. Gardner had left the check with Dr. B., and Dr. Potter presently came to me for a description of the trunk, which I gave, and in due time my baggage was recovered, looking very like an old acquaintance.

[Such trifling incidents are mentioned because they serve to show the extent of my alleged insanity, and whether those who professed to believe me *not* rational were sincere in that profession.]

After taking the first degree in the parlor, Mrs. Willets and Miss Eager, formerly of Syracuse, appeared—Mrs. Willets in the capacity of a General Supervisor, and Miss Eager in that

of a Clerk ; although they had been in Syracuse some time, I did not know them until Dr. Benedict gave me an introduction to them.

Dr. Porter came around again about that time, and I had opportunity of forming some knowledge of him. I have the pleasure of knowing that he was always a real good little fellow. He was a human being—and the only physician there that I had any reason to respect; but he was not appreciated by any except the patients—and left the Asylum soon after I went to it.

After I had seen the ladies in the parlor, Dr. Benedict asked Miss Eager to take me into the fourth hall ; and there was the second grade of insanity. This hall was a short and very pleasant one. The long halls are the whole length of the wing, and each will accommodate about forty patients. The dining room is between two short halls—that is, a long hall is divided by the dining room. Each short hall will accommodate about twenty patients.

When I got into the hall it was about sunset. Miss Eager seated me in a recess by a window, and took my bonnet and shawl. I appeared a welcome visitor to the bewildered countenances who soon gathered around me, and I looked at them and they looked at me. They reminded me of children who are brought up in the country, who seldom see any one, and a stranger is worth looking at for a long time. In the crowd there was one lady from Onondaga county who appeared attracted to me by natural affinity ; and I do believe that her influence with my own judgment assisted me in retaining the trifle of sense I had left when I went there, for mind acts upon mind. The vacant faces and disconnected conversation, together with other things, were much more than my brain was able to bear at that time. I went there under the most trying circumstances that a person could live through, and their treatment only aggravated the case. I was afraid of my life from the time I went there until I left. The principle of intuition told me the motives, feelings and proceedings of the house the first night I stopped there. I could not sleep at all. I felt as though I was surrounded by murderers, just as I was. My feelings did not deceive me, for there is a variety of different ways to murder people, and they are well understood in that house. Practice makes perfect. They do not regard a per



son's feelings there at all. In some particular cases they regard the circumstances that a patient is taken there under, more from fear of being detected than from principle.

Dr. Benedict could very easily have relieved me from all I suffered by a few words that sounded like humanity. By so doing, he would have gained my confidence and respect, and I could have felt more at home there; but he appeared to think that authority was far better than humanity. With all their medical skill and practice, I am sure they found out how much I was benefited. They appeared determined to rule me by brute force; but what did they accomplish, and why was I excited at their appearance in the hall? Because they had injured me, and then they were all mad because they saw the state of excitement I was in when they entered. They tried to drive me out of that state of mind by brute force. I have heard it said that they thought me rather flighty, but I have told the cause of it.

Dr. Benedict never spoke but one sentence to me while I was in the Asylum but what excited me, and that was only a short time before I left, when he spoke of my going away from there. I was perfectly composed, but he always appeared angry because I could not feel at home shut up in a room with twenty or thirty crazy women. It was not in my power to do that, neither could he have done it himself. What was there to enjoy in that long white room, lined with deranged minds? Such a scene before my eyes day after day did not strike me very pleasantly, and of course it injured me. Anything that is unpleasant to the senses must injure a fine temperament, especially if one be fond of the beautiful. A person with large ideality and order has no relish for the imperfect in the least.

The Doctors in the institution appear to think it a condescension to get along the easiest way, for they would not have occasion to show one-half the authority they do, at the expense of the patients' feelings, and perhaps a total loss of reason forever. If the Doctors could be spectators in those halls the length of time I have been, I think they would treat the most of cases very different; but they enter them in about the same way that the priest does the pulpit—in rather a dignified, cool, forbidding manner, as though they had something of great importance to say that never had been said before, and such

scare-crow that all must quail at the sound of their voices. In rather a cool, indifferent manner they will ask the attendants how the patients appear, and replies are made according to the likes and dislikes of the different inmates. If a patient is servile enough to please those ignorant Irish Catholics and dough-heads of Welsh and Yankee greenhorns, then there is general satisfaction; they can go into the first hall; there you will find the more amiable, but less intellectual. They will flatter the Doctors, and the Doctors will flatter them; and a patient who will not minister to the self-love of the physicians, must expect to be treated with great severity. For that reason the ladies in the better halls make it a real trade to flatter the Doctors to gain favors and get away from there, and then they make sport of it to each other. The Doctors have been flattered so much they are fond of admiration. It is a pity that great men should be susceptible of flattery; for in that place, when there is a real mind, that will flatter no one, then you will see the Doctors' revengeful feelings all out. The patient is treated according to their capricious feelings. They walk through the halls as though they thought themselves far superior to their subjects; but in that place I saw the weak points of what is called great men.

Although Dr. Benedict feels himself a distinguished personage, there is a fault somewhere, for he cannot bear promotion; and it appears to me that he only takes a surface knowledge of things in the institution, as far as the welfare of the institution is concerned, or else he chooses to have them treated as they are, for the purpose of keeping the house full for his own special benefit. His salary is worth looking at—two thousand dollars a year; besides, a great name makes a man feel himself of some consequence in this world, rather too much so to pay due attention to what crazy folks say. It is one of the disagreeable troubles of the house to listen to their complaints, and for that reason the doctors seldom notice what they say, but listen to the help. It makes them much less trouble to pretend not to believe what the patients say at all; for if they were to acknowledge that they believed the patients, and then treated them as they do, after hearing their different complaints, it would look as though they designed to treat them wrong just as they do; but they get along with it all very smooth without committing themselves. In the first place, the physi-



cians were all young, as a patient said to me one day. Said she, "We need fathers here, but we have only boys," and it is very true. The patients have their own infirmities to bear, together with the infirmities of the doctors and all the ignoramus whom they hire in the house. On the whole, I do not wonder at the condition of the incurable patients, neither do I wonder at the cases of idiocy. It is very often the most intellectual who become idiots, and I know that the most violent patients whom I saw there were the best educated women in the house, and of Yankee origin. I can assure you that they were to be dreaded when excited. One of the little women would drive forty bog-trotters. Turn them out, and let them have fair play for a while: the Irish were threatening what they were going to do,—the Yankees would have it all done. They fight by tact as much as strength. The feeling is transmitted to them from their fathers and grandfathers, but I never before realized that the American ladies partook so much of the spirit of independence as I saw manifested there. I presume they never had seen real oppression before. One woman told me that she was no less a female because she happened to be a little crazy. I then told her that if we had as kind treatment as my father's cattle received, we should fare far better than we did. Many unpleasant circumstances could be laughed off if they knew how to approach one aright; but that would not be dignified enough. They treat such cases as though they thought it more manly to inflict some awful punishment upon some poor, weak, unfortunate mind; and then perhaps to get revenge, the patient would double the crime in some other act. They were no more penitent under such torture than the Indians would be, and they will retain an injury as long as the red man will, no matter how crazy they are. You will find, by making yourself a friend to them, that all injuries are in the mind still, and whatever or whoever has caused them to suffer will excite them the moment you touch upon the points. They could not deceive me very well. Might is right in that place. I think it was designed for a good purpose, but they have made it a den of thieves. It reminded me of C. E. Lester's work on the Glory and Shame of England—the description that he gave of London, the hilarity in one apartment of a building, and the degradation, perhaps, in another apartment in the same building, divided by a partition. One moment

he would be pleasantly interested, and perhaps the next shockingly disgusted. It is a lucky circumstance for himself that he was not a nervous man, although he had his liberty to be one at any time ; but as for myself, the scenes and sounds I was witness to while in that den of iniquity, surrounded by murderers, thieves, and tattlers, will not soon be forgotten by me ; and that is not all either. The worst of it is not known yet. I never shall obliterate the impressions from my feelings if I live a thousand years. The intention of some of them was to finish me off there, but as one of the attendants said to me, " You are hard to kill." She was a friend of mine, a native of Ireland, and a Catholic ; but she was rather intelligent, with good natural abilities. If I knew that she was not there now, I would give her credit.

The Irish as a nation are said to have large adhesiveness, and in the Asylum I saw it verified, for I happened to secure the friendship of two or three women of Irish birth, who were very kind to me, and were perhaps the means of saving my life ; they followed me, as I was removed from hall to hall, and would charge the help to be kind to me, and they would sometimes send me fruit and other things. The doctors would encourage all that they had influence over in being just as ugly as possible. But the generosity of my particular friends was on a large scale, although they were foreigners. I think it is rather a leading trait in the character of intelligent foreigners to be generous on a large scale. But Dr. Benedict would certainly show himself up to greater advantage in small deeds than any other great man that ever I knew. I was in the Asylum a number of weeks before he could find an occasion to quarrel with me ; but like the women in Syracuse, he saw that I had no idea of creating any disturbance ; and for fear that I should wear better than my recommend to him allowed me to, he had rather commence a fuss himself on a small scale, and, by cultivation, it might in time cover a large piece of ground. That is characteristic of the Syracuse ladies, with the exception of five or six. The doctor may consider it rather a compliment to be classed with a majority of the Syracuse aristocracy ; but " by their fruits ye shall know them."

The doctor first started himself in business by finding fault with my sitting posture, because my feet did not happen to rest on the floor, or else I looked as though I was a little deformed,

and the doctor spent much time in endeavoring to regulate my habits in this respect, but all to no effect. I told the doctor in the state parlor that my insanity was hereditary, and just how long I had been crazy; for there was none else that knew; I had all the record of my history in my head, and I thought by giving the doctor the outlines correctly, that he would readily know what disposal to make of my case. Perhaps he did know, and if he did, he will remain a guilty man. Although I was permitted to leave alive, there are numbers of others who end their days there by indirect murder. It is always understood by the attendants how to treat the different patients, or how the doctors wish them treated; and then if one is troublesome and rather feeble, they are very apt to depart this life in a short time. "A continual dropping will wear stone," and I saw one feeble person after another drop away without any particular care or attention. What kind of nurses are those little girls who go there to hire out? They are from the factories and kitchens and country. Now and then a tailor-ess, and often some botch of a dress-maker, who is not qualified to get a living by her trade in rational society, selects that institution as a place of residence, for such work is just as good to tear to pieces as any, and it is not near as hard work as the more finished dress-making is to dissect. The violent patients do not think it much of a job to take a dress to pieces there; but those who have great force of character must dispose of it somehow or other; and if they cannot in the natural way, they will invent some other plan. This propelling power cannot be suppressed as long as there is mind left, for mind will act; it is a law of nature; and to lock up such a person for a long time, is sure destruction to the reason in some shape or other. That is the class of patients who become desperate, and terribly so when excited, and they are never fat, but generally of Yankee origin. To build a fire in a tight air stove, and not allow the heat to pass off as fast as it rarifies, I suppose there would be an explosion, for heated air will have vent, and I do not see why we cannot apply the same principle to mind. I should think that a little observation would teach us that it might be a fact.

Dr. Benedict said in one of his annual reports of the institution while I was there, that sometimes it would effect a cure if a patient got the opportunity of running away. There was

one such case while I was there, and she was one of the class of whom I have spoken, as having great force of character. She was a Mrs. Conger, from somewhere near Oswego, if I recollect right. She had not been there a great while before she made her escape from the ninth hall, the worst hall in the house except one. The girls did not happen to lock her door, and she knew that. She kept still, and when she thought the girls were asleep, she took advantage of the night watch, for she was through the halls every half hour during the night. Mrs. Conger slept in another room or hall, and helped herself to clothing out of the attendants' room, sufficient to make herself comfortable. She then found her way through all the halls, (for at night the inside doors are sometimes left open,) and then into the state parlor and out of the window. Instead of going home she started for Albany. She had often spoken to me of an uncle who resided there, where they found her, perfectly sane as she ever was. I heard that they very soon had sash-locks put on the state parlor windows. Perhaps the same mind would have been perfectly destroyed by compelling her to stop there for a long time, and I think it would be a good plan to experiment on different individuals occasionally who are not too violent. Her elasticity of constitution and her force of character together, I think, must have been the remedy, and I know it to be a fact that the same has kept myself alive for years, although I have large mirthfulness. A friend of mine once told me that I could bring that to bear against other organs that caused depression, and relieve my case very much. I seized the idea with a firm grasp, and I have laughed off what would kill fifty persons of a different constitution and good health to start with. That was why I was hard to kill. It prevents the mind from becoming a dead weight upon itself; but some are so pious that they dare not laugh even if the organ of mirthfulness is excited. They will suppress the inclination, but they will do it at the expense of their feelings, and they always suffer an injury in the head in consequence of it. What is the organ in the head for, if not for the benefit of the human family? It is hard to cramp genius. Such a person may become eccentric by not being justly appreciated, but they never will become like the popular current, and I firmly believe that one-half of the greatest



geniuses in the United States are inmates of some doleful prison or lunatic asylum.

I heard an attendant say, while I was at Utica, that the asylums were houses of convenience in many other cases besides those of insanity. There were a number of aged people there—superannuated beings, but not crazy ones. They had property to pay their expenses, but their friends did not want the trouble of them. One of them was Mrs. Rudd. She died while I was there. They said she was a minister's wife, but was never crazy. A Miss Ostrom, of Utica, was also an inmate of the Asylum, but never insane. Like other aged people, she was rather troublesome, and the fact is, that institution accommodates a variety of characters.

Insanity has become a fashionable by-word, and much degradation in high life is covered by the use of it. The laws of the institution are such that many people are taken there very unjustly, and kept there without any possible excuse. It is a fashionable prison for such persons. No matter what the patient has done, just call him or her insane, and their reputation does not suffer. Their friends feel very comfortable, knowing there will no stigma rest on their reputation, and the whole is a speculative operation. It is governed by sectarian principles. I was informed that Dr. Benedict was an Episcopalian, but there is a chapel in the institution, and I believe their minister is a Presbyterian. Other denominations preach there quite often. Although I was not very devoted to the chapel myself, I often heard from there; for every Sabbath nearly the whole retinue of attendants, with their train of followers, made up of shattered minds, would appear in the chapel. Some would make faces, others talk or mutter to themselves—some would laugh, and others remain quiet. Once in a while one would rear and pitch a little to make up the variety. Such were taken into the hall. The ladies and gentlemen never met each other except in chapel, unless the gentlemen from the better halls were permitted to go to those of the ladies, to attend some little party or exhibition, such as they very often have there, and they had to create their own sources of enjoyment. A rational mind suffers many privations in that place, but one that is truly sound on all points undergoes nearly as many out of there, certainly, if they are poor. A person who has common sense ought to be provided for in some way or other



which will allow him or her all there is for such an one to enjoy in the present state of society, as far as money will contribute to their happiness. They have a moral right to it, and it would be far less expense to the state to furnish some of them with means in time to save their reason; then they could take care of themselves. But no—that is not the fashionable way of doing business.

I can assure the public that these insane institutions are conducted in a very imperfect manner. The government being absolute, it clashes with the laws of nature. They do not harmonize; they emanate from two different sources—Nature from Deity, and the wrongs from man. God is often accused of crimes He holds man responsible for.

I had not been in Utica but a short time before a lady told me that she never should have known how women treated each other if it had not been her misfortune to be insane. I asked her if she had ever been in their power before? She said she had not. I then told her the cause of my being there—that I had no home, and that my nervous system had been destroyed by the women. After listening to her story, I told her that I believed every word of it by my own experience previous to my going there, and it was not at all likely that I should fare very well. I happened to guess right the first time.

It is not a pleasure to me to be obliged to publish facts derogatory to female character, but I feel under a moral obligation to do so in self-defense. It is just as right for me to publish facts as it is for them to manufacture falsehoods, for they deal out their gossip in such a manner that strangers very often receive wrong impressions, although I never felt slandered by my inferiors, because if such were to speak well of me it would sink me at once in the estimation of all who understand character. “Birds of a feather flock together.” Everything seeks its level.

I was told, some years ago, that one of the prominent members of the Unitarian church said she thought me a person of sterling worth. She professes to be a lady, but she is a fashionable one. It so happened that her remark about me and her treatment of me did not harmonize. It frequently occurred that I had occasion to defend her reputation—but behold! she is not the only one, and they were all glad of my influence in their favor. Some years ago I had more influence than

now have, because I dressed more. A piece of nice cloth is rather an influential article, and I knew it; but if they were gentry and myself poor, my reputation stood far higher in community than many of the wealthy class, and that hurt them. The most of those whom I had occasion to defend I then thought stood on slippery ground, and I have not had occasion to change my mind; but that class of women are the last beings who will assist me in these days. Their treatment of me reminds me of a dense forest, inhabited by wolves, who go in companies or droves, and are always on the alert for game; it appears that when one discovers an object that is desirable as prey, he will commence howling at the top of his voice, which soon arouses the whole company, and with instinctive sagacity they will then join in concert and form a ring around the man, woman, or child, or whatever it happens to be, and continue their howling, and gathering nearer and nearer to each other, until they reach their victim; then, if the man's life is insured, I very much doubt if the insurance will cover the damage. Now, I do not see why the wolf-craft will not compare with the woman-craft, so long as they both act upon the same principle. If the women put themselves on a level with the animals, why not class them with the animals? This comparison is confined to the majority of the Syracuse ladies, or rather apologies for ladies, and the majority of the hired help at the Utica institution. I expect this publication will furnish the retailers in Syracuse with sufficient capital to enter more largely into the business than ever. Competition is the life of business, and perhaps some of them will be able to do a wholesale business, for some of them are great capitalists. Practice makes perfect. I think they must have a very good knowledge of financial affairs in their line of business, which is a very lucrative one, and those that enter it largely seldom fail in business. There is another advantage in being a member of this society: it is not a secret society; their pass-words are very common, and there is always a great supply on hand; and another good feature is, the initiation fee is very reasonable,—all indigent persons can share the immunities of the society without any expense out of pocket, but simply by the use of their tongues about myself a little while. But the tongue of one of these is no slander, after all. I feel very much as the lion did when he was kicked by the jack; and I never felt as

though the law would restore a reputation, as some do in Syracuse. A lady once asked my opinion in regard to going to law for her character, and I was a little suspicious that she stood on slippery ground; I told her that if I had a reputation I should not prosecute for one, but if I had not a good reputation and could get one by going to law, I thought it would be a first rate plan, and that I was very glad there was a law that would reach as far as that. Now, as Priest May has undertaken to help the women claim their rights, who knows but he will make the law somewhat useful in many cases in Syracuse. He has pettifogged so long for the souls of the women that are edified by it, that it is highly necessary to improve their morals in some respects. Some folks will ride upon small hobbies. I was told a few years ago that Mr. May had said that he had not been mad in twenty years—as though he was entitled to much credit for his amiable disposition; but the fact is he got on to a sit-still's nest in his early days, and there he has stuck ever since, except perhaps once in a while when he has chosen to get off; but the case is left to his own option entirely. Himself and family consume without producing, and spend without earning, and to be sure the surface is extremely amiable. But if you want to know what such folks are, just cross-examine them a little, and they will show you what the composition is. What have such people accomplished in the world? They live to eat, drink, and sleep, and dress fashionably; they do not eat to live, but live to eat. And what do such people know of the business affairs of life? Their position in society is such that they imagine themselves almost equal with God—as near, certainly, as nephews and nieces. The priest informs the people what he wants, and it is no sooner said than done; and I could be equally as amiable under the same circumstances; although I am not a fixed planet, I could be quite good natured occasionally. I have not the privilege of locating in one place in Syracuse long enough to sit down, and much less to live upon one spot of ground as my own. I am obliged to move, hit or miss. But Priest May is one of your lymphatic temperaments that will not move in a direction calculated to test his business talent; he is naturally indolent; and his indolence makes him amiable; he is too lazy to get mad very often, and when he does get mad, he is too lazy to get over it. What does he know of the ills of life? He has

no occasion to get excited ; he is not a business man, and well he may sit down and boast of his nice traits of character in the presence of a company of silly women. What is such a man's experience worth to the world ? How would it read if written and published ? To an intellectual person it would be rather dry music.

I think I will let the old priest rest awhile, and talk of some one who I know has a soul. I met a Miss Marsh at the institution as a patient. She was only partially deranged. She was a real philanthropist, and I happened to be a favorite of hers, and she was a favorite of mine. Her very nature was worth more to me than an army of such doctors as they had there. Her motives were so pure that it was a great satisfaction to me to think of her. She was from Otsego county, and whenever she received a box from home, I always shared the contents with her. Her influence was felt all over the house, and she wanted me in the same hall with herself all the time. That young lady could manufacture thought. She was a milliner and dress-maker, but a person of superior qualities. I told her a portion of my experience when I was first melancholy, and the remedy for it : it was the kindness of one woman and a doctor, who understood the nature of such minds. The lady herself had been just as I was, but it was a different cause that produced the same effect. It was sympathy that cured me. She did not say but a little to me at first, neither did the doctor—but they both happened to strike just right, in a still, small voice, and that gave me a starting point at once. I have small hope, and need a little encouragement all the time. That adds greatly to my happiness. I am on high ground as long as such gas will last. Two or three words spoken just right to me is equal to a full charge of exhilarating gas to some people ; and if I had been taken to an insane institution fifteen years ago, that would have been the last of me. The patients there do more for each other than any one else does for them, because they understand each other's feelings, and take an interest in each other. That will almost effect a cure in many people, but the doctors in the Asylum treated my case very different from such as have good common sense. They made an effort to compel me to go to sewing for York state for nothing, but they got outwitted. I thought I was not quite rich enough to contribute my labor to a state institution, and more-

over I was a county patient. That calculation must have been a great stretch of the intellect in those smart men. In the first place, New York state is the largest state in the Union, and possesses the most wealth; and in the next place, Onondaga county is the most wealthy county in the state, because it will produce the most. I thought if my constitution would not allow me to work at my trade in Syracuse, when I could command six shillings per day, that it would look very much like insanity to turn in there with two or three hundred crazy women and work for nothing, and in a room, too, with fifteen or twenty crazy minds who were muttering about this, that, and the other. This is the medicine that Dr. Benedict prescribed for weak and worn out nerves—the eminent Dr. Benedict, chosen by the legislature to superintend the Lunatic Asylum at Utica!

In the first place, feeble persons should select their own diversions—and especially if they understand the laws of health, they should be very careful to select something that the mind is interested in, for there is so much sympathy between body and mind that one cannot suffer without causing the other to suffer to a certain extent; and, above all things, avoid, if possible, every circumstance that has ever caused one to suffer. The feelings should be studied. I have seen people in Syracuse whose mind was in such a state that reason was a downright insult to them. Their feelings were beyond their reason, and those who had the care of them understood their feelings, and treated them accordingly. After awhile they recovered slowly. When I was in Utica I thought of those very persons, and it was fortunate for them that their friends understood the laws of nature, for I knew that if they had been taken there and subjected to the rules of that institution, they would not remain one week before they would have become raving maniacs. They put such persons into one of the worst halls, and that is the last of them.

The rules of the house are written by the doctors, I suppose, for they correspond with their treatment to the patients. One of the rules was, that no patient should lie down during the day unless they were pronounced sick by the doctors. Sleep is one of the greatest restoratives to weak nerves of anything in the world. Fifteen minutes' sleep after dinner is a natural sanative.



"Sleep knits up the raveled sleeve of care,  
The death of each day's life."

And is not my own experience a sufficient testimony to the fact? For the last ten or twelve years previous to my going to Utica, I had practiced taking a short nap after dinner during the warm weather, and they were going to do great things with me. They were determined to break that up at any rate, and I made no small talk about it, but took the underside of the bed and there I was when the Medical Board or Staff appeared. I thought I had a right to do all for myself there that I could, and I was determined if the rules of the house would not allow me to sleep enough on the bed, I would try and make up lost time under it; but that did not suit them. I then went to bed, and there I staid month after month. They found themselves outwitted the second time; they were not cunning in some respects; they did not manifest much Yankee tact in the manner they chose to govern me, for they were almost sure to select some circumstance that they could not control to show their authority over me, but they were sure to get outwitted. As for myself, I kept an eye about these things. I made very different arrangements. I was careful not to dabble with circumstances over which I had no control, for I have got so much self-esteem and firmness that I should have felt flat enough to have been outwitted in such small and childish arrangements. Those doctors sacrifice their manly feelings to popularity, and popularity and vulgarity are synonymous terms.

A high order of humanity is called for in this generation as teachers and officers, and school teachers in particular. Much depends on teachers at school as well as mothers at home; but the most who occupy public positions in society are apt to be minor men and women. It is very apt to be the more inferior minds who seek office and self-aggrandizement, for their business is not apt to be very good anywhere, and it is a common occurrence in these days for the most inefficient beings in community to hold offices for which they receive handsome salaries. Their influence is rank poison to the morals of those with whom they are identified. City, county, town and state officers are, many of them, apt to think as much of a sit-still's nest as old Priest May, and some of them had better receive their salaries without their services and be gentlemen at large, for the morals of community would be in a much healthier state

than they now are. It is money that governs the motives of men—but I do not say they are altogether to blame. Although the word money strikes the ear very pleasantly, there is more nutrition in a row of potatoes than there is in all the gold mines in the world. Suppose a person was in a state of starvation on a desolate island, and should see a potato on the ground, and at the same time perceive a piece of gold of equal size—which would he pick up first? I am thinking the potato would be seized with avidity in preference to the gold, and although I am not exactly a Paddy, it would be very much like myself to choose a good potato well cooked almost any time in preference to a lump of gold, for two reasons—the first because I am a great lover of good potatoes; and the second, because I like to eat so well, and the expenditure of my nervous system requires hearty food. That was one of the reasons of my becoming so debilitated in the Asylum. If we had anything that I could relish, I never could get enough of it to do me any good. We had of such eatables, whenever they were sent up, just what the attendants did not want. Each attendant had a rule book while they were in the house that was written by the managers, and one of the articles in that book strictly prohibited any of the attendants having different or better food than the patients. In the good halls there is not so much of an opportunity for speculation, for the attendants and patients take their meals at the same time and at the same table; but in the violent halls it is necessary that some of the help should watch the patients, or they would injure each other, and perhaps break half the dishes on the table. All the halls use knives and forks except the basement, and when I was there I was very grateful for knowing the use of a pair of hands, and I found them convenient for other purposes too. There was an old flat faced Irish woman there who had been a peddler in Ireland. She was a patient, and she went bleating around on every side of the house in her peddling tone of voice. It was first her religion, and then “if you bate me I’ll bate you,” all in the same tune; but when she went around me with her “bate” threats, (meaning she would beat or strike,) I furnished her with another tune. She would leave off singing bass for a short time, and carry another part in the choir. Her name was May. She reminded me of an old wandering Jew.

It is no wonder that I became refined and polished during my imprisonment. My associates were so interesting that

there is not one woman in a thousand but who would have been driven to desperation in that place with the same treatment I received there. They first found what injured me the most, and that was the plan through the house by the tories. They would continue to deal out their lava quite equal to the Syracuseans in that respect, and the doctors were all of them ring-leaders in the company, as low as they were, and all of them as vicious as highway robbers, for murder was the motive.

The Catholics grow fat there in torturing the Americans. I have heard them make their arrangements how they would irritate the different patients until they would become perfectly wild and raving; and then when the doctor made his morning calls he would be informed of their terrible outbreak, for that was the plan to cause this excitement about the time that the doctor was expected around, and then they would say he will see for himself; but what did he see? He saw the effect, but not the premeditated cause. Their infernal motives are so intricate in that house that a good clairvoyant might be very useful in the institution; and when patients get excited, they are taken into a worse hall, and perhaps the arrangements are all understood in the next halls by the attendants how the case will be treated there, and so it goes. It is just as much impossible to quiet an excited mind as long as the cause exists that excited it, as it is for the leaves on the trees to remain still during a severe gale of wind. That this is a just comparison, will be agreed by any thinker or observer who looks into the different halls in that house.

I learned much more of character in the bad halls than in the more quiet ones, and I think they will not wonder at the incurable patients, neither will they that some become idiotic. But the most of these two classes are, and have been, of superior qualities.

When I went into the sixth hall, I looked around and saw some superior minds. On going into the dining room, I came in contact with the patients of the ninth hall, which was still worse than the sixth. This class was useless. There was a class still superior to the sixth hall patients, and one woman who was partially idiotic sat near me, and her features told me she had known something. I asked Frances Reed who she was, and she said it was Miss Dempster, a sister of the celebrated vocalist. Such minds are not servile enough to please the murderers who have the care of them, (such as the Catholics,)

and I told the girls that I believed that all who knew anything when they went there became afterwards either fools or raving maniacs, or died, and I was about half right in my judgment.

There was one very interesting lady who died in one of the water closets—the hospital closet—as I was told. This closet is one of the most loathsome places imaginable; the stench was terrible. I have forgotten the lady's name; but I should think her about fifty-five years of age, rather tall and thin, and very delicate; her clothes were very nice, both in material and the making. She was rather a troublesome patient, and suicidal, they said; I asked Margaret Loudon why the lady was put in bedstraps, and Margaret answered that she was suicidal—and I admired her taste, under such circumstances. The fact is, that woman had been frightened out of her wits, and then she was literally murdered in that house, for she was worn out by brute-like treatment that I was a witness to; I never saw an old canal-horse that was handled more roughly than that lady was when being harnessed down to the bedstead; the girls did not know that I saw that; but I kept promenading the hall on purpose to see how they treated the case; the door was open; I thought, from what I saw, that she could not live long, and she did not; she was a lady of very delicate sensibilities, and of course her powers of endurance were feeble; presently the lady was missing, and on my asking about her, one of the girls told me that her friends had thought it less expensive to take her home and hire a girl to take care of her there; but one of the patients told me she died in the hospital water-closet. I know what that place was, for I was there several days and nights, and took my meals there. A girl that they called Mira Manly had the care of the hospital, and if she could manage to wait on the sick in the hospital when I was taking my meals, it was her greatest pleasure; she was a Yankee, and generally got some patient to do the disagreeable part of the work. There was a little Mrs. Merritt in one of the medium halls, who was called upon by Mira as a servant in the hospital during my visit to the water-closet. Mrs. Merritt was a natural lady, delicate and modest, but her mind was a perfect wreck, though not violent. Such patients were used as servants in the bad halls, for they do not realize the degradation; they are called upon to do nearly all the drudgery; the hired attendants receive six dollars per month while the pa-



tients do all that part of the labor which the attendants feel above doing. Some of the patients are like children, and will do anything for a little sugar, or something good to eat—such as the attendants have selected for themselves, for there is generally an understanding between the hall and kitchen help; they can talk through the waiters at meal time, and as the kitchen girls are Irish, of course the Irish attendants in the halls fare sumptuously. This is in the bad halls. When I was in the basement, I grew poor on skimmed milk in my tea and coffee, while Mrs. Maloy and Mary Reynolds and Mary Olin grew fat on the cream that was skimmed off of it, and there was no taste in either tea or coffee, but sweet as sugar itself, because sugar was cheaper than tea or coffee; but I had to give up drinking it, for I vomited it up; very sweet drink of any kind will sour on my stomach. Mrs. Maloy told me that Dr. Benedict said my constitution was frail; but with all his medical skill he did not improve it—neither did he improve my morals, nor make me more polite to the medical board. It is not a wonder to me that there are so many re-admissions into the institution; I think it very seldom that a permanent cure is effected there.

Dr. Benedict said in one of his annual reports, while I was there, that he hardly knew how many to say were cured, because the re-admissions had been so frequent during the previous year. The patients cannot get their rights there unless they purchase them by doing the attendants some favor or other; and I wish to inform the world that I did not purchase much righteousness, either of the Doctors or attendants, by the few favors that I saw fit to grant them. The Doctors wished me to work for the house, and they were just fools enough to think that they could compel me to do it by directing the girls to carry some bread and water and a little gruel into my room for me to live on; but as it happened, I had not been well for some time, and I was very glad of the opportunity of lying in bed a few days; moreover, they gave me some of the best milk porridge that I ever ate, and some of the best bread that I had while I was in the house; their punishment accommodated my appetite with just what I had been wanting for a long time, for when I do not feel very well, milk porridge is a favorite dish of mine; so there was a mutual satisfaction,—their revengeful feelings were gratified, and my appetite was accommodated



for almost the first time during the three months that I had then been in the house. The object was to compel me to go to sewing, as the work I chose to do was not of any particular benefit to the house. I did not do anything until I got ready, and then I chose to assist in sweeping and dusting the hall; that was very pleasant exercise, and it benefited myself as well as the girl who had charge of the hall, and she in the meantime had to walk straight, or she would have had to do her own work; but there was no fuss until she left the hall; she was a Welsh girl named Hannah Evans. That was the first hall that I went into in the house; it was the fourth hall.

When Hannah Evans left, there was a Miss Kellogg appeared. Her origin was Irish, and a little of the low Yankee, mixed—both qualities low enough. She had been in a district school a little while somewhere or other, and she thought she would show me who she was; but I found out sooner than she expected. I could read character then; but I kept shady, and Madame did not find it out for some time; but when she did, she was mad enough about it, and her first business was to create a disturbance between the Doctors and myself. I did not like her; she was quite dictatorial, and rather dirty in her habits, and indolent withal. Mrs. Willets had told her that I was just about as good as an attendant in the hall, but I did not choose to help her much; I thought it was not best to do her work and bear her impudence too. She was one of the tattlers of the day and age, and would lie and steal—or, at least, she took my dictionary and kept it until I told Dr. Cook of it; and she spent the most of her time reading and talking about the Doctors. Dr. Cook was her favorite in the house then; but in Dr. Brigham's day she had been a patient there, and it appears she was smitten with Dr. Nichols, one of the assistant physicians, and when it was not "Dr. Cook" it was "Dr. Nichols." Although I do not retain names very readily, I have not forgotten theirs. She made an indelible impression of the two, and perhaps it will assist me in cultivating my recollection of names. She always had one favorite among the patients, and no matter how the rest fared, she was devoted to her favorite. Of course she was careful to select some one who would flatter her vanity. I was her first choice, but I did not like her tastes, and soon declined to be her familiar; for she was not a person that I could learn anything from that was right; and when I saw that she

was determined to make disturbance, then I fed her up with trifles, to see her start for the office; a trifle would do, with what she could add on the way from the hall to the office, although she went in a hurry—and she was so fond of seeing Dr. Cook that she was perfectly ready at all times to report the patients to their injury, in order to make an errand to the Doctor.

It was about this time that Dr. Benedict thought I had better go to sewing; I told him I would not; he said he would see; I told him he would have an opportunity of seeing, but not of seeing me in the sewing room—and he found me as good as my word. When he saw that he had got his match—to gratify his revengeful feelings, said he, “We will hold you here a long time.” I was told that he was sworn to be just; where was the justice, either to myself or the county that paid my expenses? He made a very profitable job of it, for a great man. I got a young lady to ask him for a situation in a dining room, and he told her I could have it; but I learned that old Em Sayles and Madame Kellogg interfered—and at all events I did not get it; another evidence of greatness, to be influenced by two or three old maids.

I once heard Mrs. Willets say that a very eminent physician had expressed the opinion that no one person ought to stay in an institution as an attendant longer than one or two years at the extent; for mind acts upon mind. There was one young lady taken to the institution while I was there, who had become partially deranged in consequence of taking care of her deranged mother. These facts all go to show up the motives of the Doctors in my case. Can any rational person wonder that I am nervous?

The fact is, I never was blocked out for a fashionable person. I have no tact in fashionable society. I have no secretiveness, and suavity is rather a scarce article; and I am a miserable matter-of-fact being, almost a disgrace to community, for the simple reason that I have spoken of. But I hope the managers of the institution will please see that I have the value of the articles they took from me when my trunk was opened, under pretensions of keeping them more safe than they would be to remain in my trunk. They first took one quire of writing paper and three shillings of money, and a few envelopes. In a few months they took my shears, those for which I had paid five shillings. Miss Eager took the first articles, when she

marked my clothes and also a dress pin, for which I had paid nine dollars. The dress pin I recovered previous to my leaving, by Dr. Gray's permission. I had heard of patients losing their jewelry. My pin was a jet pin, and had a lock of my father's hair, and also a lock of one of my brother's hair in it. My brother is not living, and my father I never expected to see again. The two circumstances made the pin very valuable to me. The last I heard of my shears, Mrs Willets had them in custody to take them to the office, and when I left I told them what I had in the office. The attendant went for them—but behold! there were no such things there. With my insanity I have not been the person who has taken the value of one dollar that did not belong to me. It is true my poverty has allowed me to ask people for what I could not do without—but not to be guilty of petty larceny. Such crimes in me would be recognized by law, but great fashionable and rational folks are out of the reach of law—for such persons control law, and the poor folks are the vulgar thieves. Sixpence of that money I went nearly one mile and a half on purpose to ask a friend—Mrs. Joseph Bradley—to give me, which she did. I wanted some woolen yarn, for knitting, and went to several stores to obtain it, without success; it was furnished me at the institution, and charged to the city or county. Part of my paper was given me by a friend. When Miss Eager was marking my clothes, she said it would be a pleasure to her to do the marking if the clothes of all the patients were in as good order as mine. It appears that she thought that my trunk of clothes looked quite rational for a person who had been crazy ten years and a half. I felt quite complimented, and told her that I had been obliged to make all my arrangements myself, and I did think that they were expecting rather too much from a violently insane person; yet I knew that they thought me quite superior.

I hope the public will excuse my egotism; for I have been obliged to cultivate it in Syracuse, to keep myself above the repulsive influences that I was daily forced into contact with. I have had to go around just like an old porcupine, for years. Porcupines will keep their quills erect as long as they think there is any danger of their rights being invaded, and they generally feel so at the sight of a human being. The women are my most inveterate enemies. The God of nature has seen

fit to furnish all animals, and reptiles, and insects, and fowls, and fish, with weapons of warfare; and why is God the author of these things, if it is not right that we should protect ourselves? I do not think that a female has much self-respect that will not make an effort to protect herself. Self-protection is one of the most noble principles of man's nature. Thomas Paine said that to love our enemies is simply offering a premium for crime. I presume that God knew previous to my existence that I should have to fight the Syracuseans, and it would require great combativeness to do justice to those amiable ladies, who were never crazy in their lives, but always rational on all points. I am proud to know that my insanity is in my head. I have no sympathy with the mania that prevails in Syracuse in certain circles, for they are certain to commence hostilities with me. There is so wonderful a grace attached to virtue that even the worst of characters acknowledge its power, though they are incapable of feeling its effects. I am sorry that brass is made a substitute for brains in so many cases as it is. But hope is based on the energy of character. A strong mind always hopes, and has always cause to hope, because it knows the mutability of human affairs, and how slight a circumstance may change the whole course of events. Such a spirit, too, rests upon itself. It is not confined to partial views or to one particular object; and if at last all should be lost, it has saved itself—its own integrity and worth. It is a soothing consolation that truths and facts do not depend upon our belief or disbelief of them. I mean to do all that I can for such as are predisposed to insanity, and if I cannot do anything, they must take the will for the deed; for the bewildered and woe-begone and listless countenances that lined the institution at Utica will ever be a prominent feature in my memory. To see a long room with forty women traveling to and fro, and numbers in the company in a half-abstracted state of mind, reminded me of the Arabs in the deserts of Arabia; although the Arabs are capable of fixing upon some purpose or other, yet they have to travel over a great deal of ground to accomplish a little. But I do feel as though it would be a loss to the world and the rising generations to throw away so much American talent and originality as there is thrown away in that institution for the insane; for when the unfortunates get there it is too late to save them. And what wreck can be so great as

the wreck of a great and noble mind, which is the noblest work of God? If rational people could know what passes in that house, even in one week's time, before the end of another week the house would be vacated. Most of the attendants wear a surly and forbidding countenance, for the purpose of keeping the patients in fear of them and subservient to their wishes; then they will mind quick and do the hard and dirty work, for which they are well spoken to the doctors, though the fact of their doing the drudgery is not mentioned. Their conversational powers, their motives and manners, habits and ignorance, and the rules of the house, altogether form a scene that a person of nice feelings can scarcely bear to look upon. I have often closed my eyes to avoid witnessing these things. The whole presents a pleasing spectacle for those who admire such. Instead of becoming acclimated, the patients become perfectly alienated from everything that is human, for their affections are not cultivated there, their reason has fled, and the mind runs at random like electricity from a cloud.

When strangers are present, Dr. Benedict is all complacency, and very much of a gentleman in his deportment, and his natural tone of feeling is extremely nice. His head is rather small in size, but it is not the quantity of brain that affords these nice minds; it is more the quality. I should think that he was capable of selecting rather an enlarged class of views or ideas, but he does not manifest them in the house; still I think that they do exist in his mind. His head is smooth, and I think he was blocked out for a very perfect organization. Such folks, however, are not fitted for great responsibilities; their powers of endurance are not sufficient to ensure them long life. Dr. Benedict is already a worn-out man.

There is one fact I will mention, but I do not suppose it will do any good. I feel impelled to express my mind upon the subject, and it proves to be this:—I do not think that it is right to take foreigners to any of the public institutions in the United States, and allow the different nations to intrude upon the feelings of each other. The most of the foreigners, the Catholics in particular, took delight in annoying the American ladies; they are educated to do such things; and there were so many Catholic attendants there that they were often encouraged in such things. The foreigners ought to be placed by themselves, and have their own physicians and their own attendants, and



the Americans the same, for they do not understand each other's feelings any more than swine and sheep do; but they are not to blame for their imperfections of character. It is the effect of priest-craft. They are a poor, ignorant, priest-ridden people, and it is the imperfect human beings who make the more perfect ones nervous, irritable and crazy; and then to fall into the hands and power of just such a set in the insane institutions as cause their insanity in the first place, is a two-fold measure, for there they are locked in, and if their friends call to see them they are not permitted to look behind the scene. The doctors direct the attendants to take the American ladies out into a better hall before their friends are permitted to see them. It is so with many of them. They are neglected in almost every respect. I suppose they have formerly suffered very much for bedding; I had this from a reliable source; but now they are furnishing the house with more comfortable beds and bedding; and yet who wants to lodge there after all who are taken there? I hardly saw a mattress in the house fit for a person of cleanly habits to sleep on. I usually took care of my own room, and I had the reputation in the institution of being a good house-keeper. I did not wear dirty or ragged clothes, unless I tore some old dress to vex the doctors, for that was enough to get them all to simmering, when they would boil over, and that afforded me a little sport. The good girls enjoyed it as well as myself. Dr. Benedict I called Nero, and Dr. Cook was Robespierre; and there is an other wee bit of a specimen of the human family who is only fit for a band-box; he has not sufficient powers of endurance to last him more than two hours, but he was not deficient in authority. He wore himself all out threadbare in trying to make a great man of himself, and still he grew less and less all the time; but Dr. Gray was "Old Rough and Ready." I should think he was a very good scholar, but rather low and vulgar. He was a person whom I could not respect, although he had redeeming traits of character. He had many generous impulses on a large scale. His origin was Dutch and Irish, if I am not mistaken. I suppose he thought more of waiting on the ladies in the city than he did of the patients, but he was not as well paid for it. Dr. Cook was devoted to the patients in his own way, which was to show his authority. The doctors

all mow a great swath there, but if I am not mistaken God will handle them without mittens yet.

I do not believe in capital punishment, and never saw an execution. But if the rules of that house will allow them to murder in an indirect manner, as they do, and as they calculated to murder me, I do not see why I am not justified in wishing to have those doctors executed, just the same as though the murders were acts of momentary impulse—and much more so, I think, for a person that is murdered in an instant, does not suffer equal with those that live a long time in torture. Those doctors profess to be rational men, and their treatment of me was simply in gratification of their revengeful feelings; I was told so, moreover, by one of the good attendants. I have the same right to harbor revengeful feelings that they have, and even more, for I am still suffering from the effects of their murderous treatment. I must say that Dr. Benedict, and Dr. Cook, and Dr. Gray, and old Priest M. of Syracuse, are the first persons and the only ones that ever I felt as though I could see executed. But I do feel as though it would relieve my feelings of a great burden to look on and see them swung off; and I was not alone in feeling so while in the institution. I have seen some of those patients when the expression of their eyes was such that one might think to light a candle by the electricity that flew from them when speaking of the doctors. And any person with my experience might say the same of others if they had moral courage enough to speak the truth and give the same account of themselves that I have, and feel just as I do, and be honest enough to acknowledge that they do feel so, after telling what it is for, so that the community may draw their own inferences without experience.

St. Paul says, "Live in peace with all, as far as in your power lies;" but Christ himself could not live in peace even while he was permitted to live, and that was only thirty-two years; yet much credit is given him for his amiable disposition in sacrificing his life to save the world, or, to use my own language, such a set of loafers as the world afforded at that time. He wanted to live as much as other folks do, if the bible is reliable authority; for it reads to that effect, in three different places. His reconciliation was an involuntary one, decidedly so—from compulsion. There is no law in nature that leads one to suffer from choice. Happiness is the aim of all man

kind, but the most of the world strike out a singular course to obtain it.

There was a very interesting little woman in the sixth hall at the Asylum, whose name I have forgotten, and who was sick in bed and had a very bad cough when I first saw her; she would often break dishes; I called on her frequently; she had black hair, and what passes for black eyes, and a white skin, a little freckled, but handsome. One day I was looking at her, and I noticed a spot on the top of her head that was rather curious; the hair was short, and about the color of tan-bark, and the spot was about as large as the palm of my hand. I asked her what was the cause of that spot on her head, and she said that when the attendants bathed her they threw soft soap on her head and did not wash it off, and it had taken off the hair in a short time. From the appearance of it, I judged it had taken off the skin also. Frances Reed had charge of the hall at that time. Perhaps that act had added to her happiness; for I once heard her say that she could run daggers through the patients, and that remark harmonized with her treatment of them. I hope Catharine Gough felt better after striking a lady at the dinner table one day, for nothing; out of that place such an act would have sent her to jail; it was either Miss Dempster, or the lady next to her. I once asked one of the Catholic attendants if she confessed all things to the priest; saying that if she did, I hoped she would not forget the old strong soft soap, fresh from the factory every week, which the patients were obliged to use. Just washing my pocket-handkerchiefs with it would sometimes cause my fingers to bleed. Catharine Gough was a Catholic, but she did not do that deed. I never had spoken to Frances Reed when I went into the sixth hall, but I knew by her actions that old Em Sayles had told her what disposal to make of my case. The expression of her countenance told me that; but I thought I should outwit them, and I did. I discovered that Frances had small benevolence and very large destructiveness, and the love of approbation was also very large in her head; so I concluded she must be susceptible of flattery, and knowing that flattery would disarm a person, I took to flattering her, and by taking the advantage of her weak points I fared first rate. I did all that I could to make her think that she was a great fancy article, and I wondered that she had no more admirers; I thought the gentle-

men were rather deficient in taste, or her superior qualities would be better appreciated. It is a positive fact that I did save my life there by understanding something of human nature. A few weeks before I left there, Mrs. Hollis, the woman that had charge of the hall that I was on, (the ninth hall,) told me that the doctors were beginning to find out that it made a great difference with the patients who and what they had for attendants; but if they had not understood that fact until that late day, they must have been dull scholars, or there was a great lack of interest; for I could have told any one that fact any time within ten years, myself, and I am no scholar—but my feelings would tell me that. As soon as I saw how matters went in the institution, I knew that I should fare hard; but I formed a determination to live through it to tell the story. I was brought up to believe that death was the king of terrors, but I find that to be a great mistake; it is altogether in our education. I have found more to terrify me in life than I ever shall in death, if the two-legged hyenas will stay away from me. They are the amiable women of Syracuse.

There was a Miss Gould in the Asylum, from Rochester, I believe; she died in the hospital, and I cannot say how she fared there; but she was taken off from the second hall, when ordered to the hospital, and I very well know how she must have fared in the second hall. Eliza Chapin had charge of that hall, and Miss Gould suffered for want of care; she was delicate and worn out, and would call for the girls as long as she had strength, and after a rest she would call again; but Eliza took no interest in the poor girl, or, if she did, she was too lazy to move. Delia McKendrick was in the hall as an assistant, and Eliza and Delia would quarrel about waiting on Miss Gould, and then neither of them would half do it. Such influences must be very healing to a well-bred, delicate and sick person. Eliza was an American, and Delia was an Irish Catholic.

I shall not cloak any low Yankeeism. We have a right to expect more from an American than from a foreigner, for our opportunities have been different from those enjoyed by the foreigners. The Catholics are not capable of respecting our rights, and we ourselves have almost lost sight of justice to any except the negroes and other foreigners.

It was not safe for a patient to report one of the attendants

to the doctors, for they would listen to hear what the patients said to the doctors, and then they would watch their opportunities for revenge on the patients. They could not reach the doctors to cause them to suffer, but they would always be mad if the doctors listened to what the patients said, especially if they got a reprimand. The physicians would not more than get out of the halls before the help would say, "Now look out, madam, for next bathing day." That meant holding them under the water just as long as they dared, and more than once, too. The bathing troughs are cast iron, and very heavy; and one would be surprised to see the marks of that iron trough on the limbs of the patients between the foot and knee joint. There was generally the variety of colors and shades, such as usually accompany bruises. On a number of patients whom I saw it was frightful to look at them. At first I did not comprehend it, and I asked them the cause. They told me it was the effect of being pushed against the bathing troughs and the bedsteads. I looked at the bedsteads, and they were about as solid as iron; they were made very heavy, with iron bands around each post, made fast with screws. That was right so far, but the side pieces had sharp corners, and they were not so pleasant to run against in a hurry, just when the attendants saw fit to give them a push. I know they are often rather stubborn when being undressed, but they are crazy, and such treatment does not improve them in the least. I sometimes told them I had been a dress-maker, and I appreciated colors. I thought we might as well laugh as cry.

The rule book says that no patient must be deprived of going into the dining room to meals, except it be by sickness or excitement; but how often do the doctors do it because they get mad at a patient. A Miss Webb was there, whom the doctors thought ought to go to work, and I was told by the help that she was not allowed to go into the dining room but twice a day for a long time. I know that she was rather lazy, but that did not cost them anything. She was not sent there for her indolence—she was sent there for her insanity; but they did not effect a cure. I think an institution ought to be built on purpose for a certain class of individuals who have never done anything but infest society with their vicious habits. They are more detrimental to the morals of society than the same



number of Tartars would be, for the Tartars would have no influence.

I acknowledge that Dr. Benedict is a piece of native refinement, but circumstances have made him what he is. The circumstances by which he has been surrounded have not been favorable to his organization. These facts are all to be taken into consideration in his case, just as much so as any other individual, and it is high time they were taken into consideration and regulated accordingly, as fast as possible and as far as they can be.

The insane institutions are built much too large and too far apart. There should be about four in the State of New York, where there is now only one, for I noticed that the nearer a patient's friends were to the institution, the better they were treated. Strangers have too much confidence in the character of the house. Dr. Benedict would be very useful in such a place where there was a more select class of patients. Just take the grubs or the low order of bipeds out of his sight and hearing, and his brain would cool off after a while; but as he was situated in Utica, his feelings were not in a state to benefit even the class of patients that his organization and education had fitted him for. Every institution requires a number of physicians with different organizations, and then, perhaps, the variety will be capable of adapting themselves to the feelings of the different individuals.

Dr. Cook's nature is fitted for a class of patients of a very nice caste indeed, for the vulgar and the uncouth wear upon his nature fast enough to wear him threadbare in nine days; and understanding such a nature myself, I took my own way to irritate both Drs. Benedict and Cook, but not until after they showed their hoofs. Dr. Cook I often called "hub" — but "hub" and I were no longer friends after he told the girls to take bread and water gruel into my room. It is the motive I look at. I thought I would just let them know that their old iron and copper keys would never frighten me to make a great effort to secure the friendship of those who carried them, or those who locked me in my room with them. There is not much government in a bit of copper or iron as long as either will not lock up my mouth. My tongue has the agency of my brain, and neither the use of iron, steel nor copper will suppress the force of facts that my brain manufactures and crowds

off at the end of my tongue. To be sure, much steam has evaporated through the pores that I should not have allowed if the petticoat race had been more quiet; and I aim to accommodate them all with just what their natures are the most capable of appreciating, as far as I have the ability. I do not see how nor when my tongue ever finds time to coat over for a fever, for I should think that I could keep it worn smooth dealing out justice to such as are strangers to it—such as choose “darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.” “The stronger must bear the infirmities of the weak,” for if the “blind lead the blind” both will surely run off the track into the ditch, and perhaps their heads will find a pillow against the curb-stone. I should be a blind guide, but I do not feel guilty for any of the lessons I have given the Syracuseans, for I am convinced that I have left the state of society in as good a condition as I found it, and in much more of an enterprising condition. When I came to Syracuse there was a general stagnation of business for the want of a little capital, and I happened to have it on hand. I worked off a little of my Yankeeism, and the village was electrified with the Yankee enterprise. It has been a growing place ever since, and I think it bids fair to make the greatest thoroughfare in the Union. Much credit is due the women. I feel very much disposed to eulogize the ladies of Syracuse for their perseverance of character, for out of their combined energies I reap a rich reward. I never should make a great fuss in the world if I had not been thrown upon my own resources.

I suppose the ladies of Syracuse will think me rather complimentary, if it is in something of an ironical way; and I hope they will please to acknowledge it, by furnishing my tongue with a new papilla. To be sure, I can use it yet, but it is now rather smooth, and I think it has injured the sense of taste a little. But they have not allowed me as much time to rest as the Bible allows to every one. God allows me one day in seven to rest, but the women have taken his business out of his hands; for they have kept up the same old hot-bed during the Sabbath as usual; as perfect and as sublime as their ideas are, I have been obliged to listen to them. “From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”

A low mind will select low ideas; but since my head has

become so hollow that I could have a sewer pass through it, the rubbish passes off with much less trouble than before.

Fifteen years of the best part of my days have been spent for nought, trying to quarrel me into a religion that was established by twelve men by the sword, and of which the shedding of blood has ever been the consequence, and ever will be unless restrained by law. What a sublime sight it must be to look on and see one man in the agonies of death, surrounded by the fiery fagots, to gratify the feelings of another man's destructiveness! Do they get that piety from the Bible? No: they make use of the Bible only as a fashionable byword. Theory and practice are two different religions. But the rational, pious people of Syracuse have nicknamed me; and of course they will not object to my publishing facts relative to their treatment of me, as long as they consider me crazy; and such as they dare not say themselves, they will teach their children to say. But I never as yet have had any reason to think that the fathers of these children have been guilty of so low acts, for I find that many of the women are very careful how they deal out to me in the presence of their own husbands, and so they would make it to appear that I quarrel all alone; that makes me out as the possessor of two tongues—an absurdity; for I never was accused of quarreling when alone, in my life. They are much frightened lest I shall not prove to be what they have represented me to be, and so they have had to double their diligence, to keep ahead of their ticket. They will go from house to house to inform one another; "What an awful being she is! I should be afraid of her. Perhaps she will murder you, or kill the children, and I should'nt wonder, if, before she leaves the house, she should step on the cat's great toe and put that out of joint!" It is very true, I have met with some men that I could not respect by any means. I cannot say that, that I do not know; but when I first went into different families to make dresses, I was told by some of the ladies that there were a few gentlemen in the place, whom I had perhaps better avoid if possible, for just as like as not they would not be polite to me. I was not frightened, but kept an eye out. But, behold! the abrupt treatment that I have received has been from the identical class of ladies that took the responsibility upon themselves of telling me the news that

they did. I never have been convinced that what they told me was fact, but perhaps they had the best means of knowing.

If the ladies in Syracuse had always treated me with as much civility as the gentlemen have—to take them as they rise—I could have got my living there independent of the public, and not been obliged to go to the Lunatic Asylum for a home. Dr. A. B. Shipman told me, before I went there, that I was not crazy, unless Emanuel Swedenborg was; and I thought it rather a compliment, for I had read a small portion of his writings, and I found him to be a very great man, and also a very good man. I thought something of the Doctor's judgment, for he is also on the list with the great men of the age. But I have been told, since I left the institution at Utica, that Dr. Benedict said he thought me a little flighty. That remark does not ensure to him much credit; it only proves the truth of what I assert, that the institution is calculated to make rational people crazy; and if that is the case, are we sure it is the right place for making crazy folks rational?

I suppose that nearly five hundred dollars have been paid by Onondaga county and the city of Syracuse for my support—I will not say benefit, for I know better; and if they had paid the same amount over to me at the time that I spoke to them about it, which was five or six years ago, I would have owned a handsome little property by this time, and by the rise in the value of property, I would have been ensured a good living and a head full of useful knowledge. But who has controlled affairs? Their means have gone for nought; while, under their treatment, my mind has run at random, every which way, as to both intellect and feelings, so that I feel scarcely like a human being. They were all rational, of course, but I am still destitute of a "home." "Oh, consistency! thou art a jewel."

I was obliged to go out of Syracuse to write this publication. I have a friend living a mile or two out of the city, and I asked if she would allow me to write at her house; she said yes, at once, and the matter was settled. She knows her own business, and I have found it very pleasant at her house. I am not insensible to my inability in writing such a work as I wish to write, for no one is more sensible than myself that my feelings are not exactly fitted for writing a work that would interest the intelligent reader, and my style of composition is



without much order. I am giving but the outlines of what I still retain in my memory; and I presume the outlines will be better than the filling up. Perhaps in some subsequent work the public will get more of the particulars.

I must give the Syracuse gentleman credit for one act of politeness; they were some of the pious ones, and are therefore entitled to much credit for such acts. They one day got into a polite fit, and ordered out the City Marshal, with his carriage and a beautiful span of little Indiana ponies, to wait on me up to the Onondaga County House, about four miles from Syracuse. I was acquainted with the gentleman, and he understood my arrangements perfectly well. I told him I was very much pleased with the opportunity of riding out; that I had seen the institution, and the location was beautiful, the air salubrious—just such an atmosphere as my constitution required during the warm season of the year—and that I felt perfectly safe in regard to the treatment, for I knew it could not be much worse than such as I was daily receiving. And, sure enough, I met with a warm reception at the County House, although Col. Eaton and his family were strangers to me; I was admitted into the family and treated with respect. The orders were that I should be confined in a cell, because I was a dangerous person; but there I was—here, there, and everywhere, and no one felt any danger; nor had any person reason to feel in danger, except the guilty—such as were guilty of injuring or trying to injure me. Col. Eaton said nothing about any cell, except the parlor. Of course, men who superintend public institutions are responsible for the full performance of their duties; and I think that Colonel Eaton understood his responsibilities and liabilities very well; but he had moreover a manly nature and human feelings, and was ready to risk something out of pocket for humanity's sake. I believe there were some threats, but the Colonel was a man, and told the threateners that he was prepared for them—they were at liberty to draw upon him as quick as they pleased, and he should stand his ground with them. While I was at his house, he went to Syracuse and looked around a little, and found that my friends were some of the first families in the place. He asked the men who were accessory to my going to the County House if they knew the nature of the character they were dealing with. "Oh, yes—certainly we do." He then told the



great men of Syracuse that Miss Phebe Davis had forgotten more than they all knew, and that she was one of the first women in the country, and had a very powerful intellect. He told me this himself; but I did not see the extent of his remark until I went to the Insane institution, where I had expected to see great men—and there I compared their greatness with my own handful of ideas, and, on the whole, I thought if they knew the most, what little I did know was the most useful in the world; and when I came from Utica I gave the Colonel credit for his good judgment. While I was at the County House a member of Colonel Eaton's family gave me two shillings, and invited me to go visiting with them; we had great times picking blackberries—and, by the way, we had cream to eat on them; and we had most excellent coffee, which was also seasoned with cream. I gained three pounds in weight and was much improved within six days after I went there. Altogether, I made a very profitable job of it, for I felt ten per cent. better every way. The Colonel was a very intelligent and an honest man; he is not a professor of religion.

When I went to the Asylum at Utica—that haven of rest, as some suppose it to be—I found that the superintendent was a pious man. When I first heard one of the patients say that Dr. Benedict was a professor of religion, a cold chill passed through my system as quick as lightning; and I felt as though that chill had caused a general stagnation of my blood. I knew that I was locked into that place; and those feelings were caused by a remembrance of the manner that I had been treated by “pious” people previously.

What little blood I had left, when I came from the Asylum, had ceased to circulate. I could not raise a vein in my hand, any more than I could in a stone, until I had been out a number of days. One day I was washing my clothes, and my sleeves were rolled up; all at once I saw the blood passing down one of the large veins in my left arm, and I stopped washing to look at it, for it was the first symptom of life that I had seen; I had thought that perhaps there was not vitality enough left in me to enable me to hang on to life; but I said nothing to any one about it, and kept on moving slowly about, going where I could get such as I wanted to eat. It was some months, however, before I felt as though I could stand straight without fainting, and not until I had a long fit of sickness did I feel at

all like myself. It was no wonder that I was diseased and broken down ; for the atmosphere that I was compelled to inhale into my system, some part of the time that I was in the Asylum, was rank poison to the blood.

There is a hall in that house, away off by itself, which they call number twelve, and in which there are six cells. When a patient gets there, I believe it is considered the greatest punishment allowable. But they went one degree further with me ; I was sent to the *hospital water closet*, and received my meals in bed there. When the hospital was waited on, I covered my food and myself up in bed ; that was better than no method of avoiding the stench of the place ; but still I had to take my meals in a horrible atmosphere.

It is a new idea to me, the making use of a water-closet for a sleeping room. Any place that afforded such a stench in any city corporation would be made out a nuisance by the board of health at once, and not allowed to remain unmoved two days.

The cells of which I spoke are in the middle of the hall, but they are rather small, and that leaves a broad aisle all around the cells. There are windows in the outside walls of the hall, but not any glass in the cells. There is a little affair in the cells that perhaps would measure ten inches square. I do not know the mechanical name for it, but I called it the young ventilator. The doors were what they called slat doors, and there was a pretense of ventilation from the windows in the outside wall of the house. Mary Reynolds had the care of No. 12, and she knew nothing more of the laws of health than a cow. She could not read her name when it was written, but she could say to the patients, "Sot ye down in this cheer, and not spake until ye are spoken with." Such dialects strike the ear beautifully, and with the rest of the perfection in that house it is a wonder that I did not improve while I was in those cells, and water closet in particular.

The cells are partly warmed by a furnace in the outside wall of the house, and partly not warmed at all. When I went into one of those cells I went from No. 11 ; and in that hall there was a large box-stove, and of course it was the warmest hall in the house. I wore much less clothing than usual, and my clothes were very thin, for they were old summer ones. I had a single plaid shawl on when I went there, but Mrs. Ma-

loy said that Dr. Benedict told her to take that shawl out of the cell, and there was not anything in the room, even a straw bed.

The patients who occupy the cells at night are generally very filthy, and the rooms have to be cleaned every morning, and of course that causes them to be damp nearly all day—quite too damp to sit or lie on. I had to lie on the floor and run the risk of the consequences. I was quite too weak to stand up all the time, and my shoes were not much thicker than wafers; but I thought I would keep myself alive if I could. I thought I should live to pepper them off just right yet, and I even arranged some of this work while in those cells, which I retain until this day.

Some of the cells are plastered, and others are ceiled up and varnished; but those that are plastered are varnished, too, with a new kind of varnish, such as I never before knew rational people to use for the last finish of a room. That must be human refuse, and it must be that some one put on the coat with a brush, for it was done just as even as any whitewashed work I ever saw. I perceived that the floor was clean, and what created that perfumery I could not tell. I know that the patients will do such things, but their work is left more in the form of landscapes, and that was the reason I did not detect where the trouble was in a moment. As soon as I thought, I gracefully met the surface of the wall with my nose; the story was told, and my nose made a number of calls in different places on the wall; they were all just alike, and all looked alike. It must have been a very interesting job, for it was very harmoniously done; but to me it was altogether a new medicine for insanity, and the intellect that manufactured that idea must have had a good supply of electricity on hand—and it was a great stretch of the intellect at that. I think it would be right to award that man a gold medal as a premium for his professional skill. He must have been a well-read physician. It is true my olfactory nerve has not been as sensitive since that time, but I do not consider that as much of a loss as it was to lose the use of my right arm the winter following, or, to a certain extent. I was not able to put my hair up alone as much as once during the winter, and I could not lift anything of any consequence with my right arm for nearly one year. Mrs. Maloy got me a phial of hartshorn liniment from the office, with written direc-

tions for using it, and I had not used it but a few times before Mary Reynolds snatched it away from me, and locked it up in the clothes-press. The next I saw of it, Harriet Becker had it. She was a patient, and she would help them do their work, and they would favor her. It appears that Mary had told Harriet not to let me see it, but she dropped the phial on the floor, and she and Mary looked at me to see if I saw it. I would not condescend, however, to ask the great uncouth bog-trotter for it. They had to give me medicine for a cough I had in consequence of taking cold in the cells and in the water closet. I was obliged to have the window up all the time; it was late in the fall, cold and rainy, and no fire could reach me. I staid in that place and in the cells the most of the time for three weeks; and when I was in the cell some of the time I had no bed-clothes on my bed except some old torn blankets, and they were very filthy at that; they were what some call Indian blankets. I kept what clothes I had upon me, and got into the straw just as hogs do in a cold night. The straw was damp, but that was the best I could do with what I had to keep house with.

The patients who lodge in the cells are generally so filthy that it is necessary to fill the beds with new straw every morning; and, rain or shine, the beds are drawn through the yard. What private family would think a straw bed fit to sleep on in that condition, without a mattress? But crib patients are all of them put on that damp straw as soon as it is taken into the house; and also damp clothes and wet bed-clothes are used.

It is enough to make one shudder to see the helpless treated as they are. I can describe the prominent circumstances, but the great whole is one scene of abuse and suffering, that cannot be told to the public by the use of the pen; for I will venture to say that it is the most complicated affair to describe I ever knew anything about. There is a double meaning to almost every word, thought, and deed. Lying is the least of crimes in that house.

When Madam Kellogg told Dr. Benedict what a criminal I was, I told him that she did not speak the truth, and she said that her word was as good as mine; that was as much as to say that a lie was as good from her as the truth was from me. He listened to her very attentively, for she had run to the of

fice until she had got him perfectly rabid, and he was just like a jug handle, all on one side. As soon as I said a few words, he saw that I was telling the truth, and he flew mad; but I said all I had to say.

I was told that the sink-room and bathing-trough missed me a little. Although I found the hall and sink-room in very good order, when I went there, I thought I could improve the wash-bowls a little, if I was somewhat flighty. Madam Kellogg's tattling was not exactly lost to herself. In the first place, she enjoyed it very much, and it improved her looks some too, for she had rather a short neck. She had to run to the office very often to report me, and she thought so much of Dr. Cook that when she started for the office her head went so much faster than her body that it generally reached the office sometime before even her shoulders did, and of course her neck got to be a suitable length for her body. It really was quite elastic. The fear of being an old maid was terrible to her; and Sally Richards also made matrimony a topic for conversation, and nothing else. When a patient went into the hall where Sally or Madam Kellogg were, if they thought she was more than thirty years of age, they very soon made it their business to ascertain what her condition was, and if the lady proved to be an old maid, it was truly a frightful affair. You would not see a smile on their faces until another lady appeared who had been more fortunate, in having had the good luck to get married; and then madam and Sally would be more cheerful. Sally's neck got rather too long to look well, for she made it her business to count all the old maids at meal time in the dining-room, and that gave her the opportunity of stretching her neck a little; but hers was rather longer, to start with, than madam's was. After a while I got into the hall Sally had charge of, and I kept her from being very idle. I told Dr. Cook that she said she would inform him of all my proceedings, and I thought best to keep her mind informed. "Bub" managed the card very well. Dr. Porter was there then, and he helped me along a little, for he was full of game himself. The patients would be around in a careless way, but they heard what the tattlers told the doctors about me, and then I could outwit Sally. The old tattlers in the institution I called the "express train." Em Sayles belonged to the swift train, and we have one very superior character in Syracuse who belongs to the



same company. She is capable of occupying a very conspicuous position in the company, too. Her tongue has been running a race with the telegraph news for a long time, until at length I believe the company have thought it best to employ her tongue in preference to electricity, in case of emergency, for her line of business is not confined to one route. She is truly eloquent in imparting, displays much taste in her selections, and is highly spiced with tact; these qualities make her interesting even in fashionable society. She is able to follow two occupations, and the two together afford her a rich living. I do not ask any one to take my word; just call on Elizabeth S. T., in the Pine Grove, and look for yourself. She is a rag-carpet weaver, and she has everything convenient. Her house is beautifully furnished. She has large ideality. All of her furniture is very neatly arranged.

It is Mrs. J., I believe, who took the premium at the state fair, for her remarkable business talent, and likewise her loquacity or conversational powers. She took the responsibility upon herself of telling Mr. Berry that she thought me a dangerous person. She told him she was afraid I would fire her house. He called there to make her a present of something to eat, and she would create a little sympathy by retailing what she knew to be false; and Mr. B., from some cause or other, saw fit to pass it over to one of the neighbors whom I did not know, and neither did I Mr. B. I was told that Mrs. J. had got a new agent, and I thought as Mr. B. and the family where she spoke of it were both strangers to me, that in self-defense I would drop in and see the priest on the occasion, and also the other family, and the priest said, she did tell him, and that he spoke of it; but I cannot see what his motive was. Any intelligent man ought to have known what her motive was by her conversation and the looks of her house. I thought it rather an injudicious act in the man or in a minister of the gospel to report such news, from sources of the kind, as he did. Such circumstances are derogatory to a person's character. I always think it is doing as we would be done by to look on all sides before we speak of what we hear from such sources, for the nature of such a tongue is to injure some one or another; and they do not take their inferiors, because there are none such in existence; they do not trouble their equals, for they are a harmonious set by themselves, and of course they always

take their superiors to throw off their hot lava at. I believe that Mrs. J. has a whole volume stereotyped and the copyright secured, and she can peddle at her leisure.

To sum up the gossips in all classes in Syracuse: they remind me of the old Yankees, when a swarm of bees leave the hive or premises. Bees are noted for order; and it is supposed that, when they have left a hive, if confusion can be made among them, they will light, and so be again secured. On such an occasion you will see all the girls and the mother and the grandmother ransack the pantry and the woodshed for all the old tin pans and pails and brass kettles, and the old warming-pan not excepted, and one would think that Bedlam had really broken loose; sometimes the racket will cause the bees to light; they lose their point of compass. The idle clatter of women's tongues in the city will produce just such a state of confusion in my head as the old tin pans, pails and kettles do with a swarm of bees. I can derive about as much definite knowledge by listening to the confusion of the tin-ware, as I can by listening to the conversation of the ladies in the city. That was what first hurt my head. There was such a nothingness in their ideas, that it bewildered my brain. Going to meeting affected me in a very similar manner. I could not walk straight, after listening to a sermon; neither could I after sewing all day.

I have learned by observation how to take care of myself; for I find Doctors to be ignorant of the nature of such cases. I know of a great many women that are perfectly wretched when out of a state of confusion; I have seen such cases, and observed the mental condition of the parties; they will be just as wretched as though they were in the greatest possible trouble, and I believe such folks could be thrown quite off of their track by compelling them to stay in a clean house or well-ordered room. Although Mrs. J.'s house needs purifying as with fire, I think it would be a dangerous operation, for I presume she would be an inmate of the Lunatic Asylum in less than one week's time, where I know they would take her to be an old guinea-hen, their voices are so much alike, while her features are not far behind the hen's, and she has scolded so much at the top of her voice that I believe she will yet be able to cut a person's head off with that sharp instrument of her's. I dare not go very near the house, for fear of losing my head—

and then it would go that I had committed suicide; I could not defend myself, and for that reason I had rather dodge her house. If I was going to burn the house, I would rather see it take inside, for I'm thinking the bed-bugs would dance a cotillon, and the moths would call upon the rocks and the mountains to fall on them for their depredations with the carpet-rags. When I was about going to Utica Mrs. J. owed me money; I owed a milliner four shillings, which she promised to pay for me the next week, and I promised the milliner accordingly—but it was not paid; the balance of what she owed me she had promised to pay me when I came back from Utica, but she has not; there was twelve shillings my due, and I presume it always will be.

They had kept the remainder of what change I had at Utica, and when I left there (it was the first of February) I had nothing to wear upon my hands except a pair of black mits that I wore there. I got some knitting to do, to get me a pair of winter gloves and a pair of shell side combs. (Eliza Chapin let the crazy women get my combs out of my room, and that was the last that I saw of them; they gave me a cheap pair of horn combs when I left.) When I got my knitting done, two ladies found out what I had been about, and one of them gave me four shillings, while the other went with me and told me to select such a pair of gloves as I wanted and she would pay for them; then I bought a nice hair-brush with what I got for my knitting. I felt very grateful to the ladies. They were not of the "gentry" who made me these presents.

At this time I had to do just as I could, for I could not do much at the best; I had no place where I could do things to advantage, and indeed nothing wherewith to do what I would. I was obliged to stop with a very dirty family, which was different from being in the Asylum, but nearly as bad. My head was still terribly affected, and what to do for that I did not know. Having a slight acquaintance with Dr. Lathrop, a clairvoyant physician, I concluded to consult him. While in the clairvoyant state, he looked at my brain, and said that it was too large for my skull; that it pressed against the skull, and that was what caused the awful suffering that I had to endure. He said that the skull would not expand, nor the brain contract, and the feeling must be almost insufferable at times; that this nutshell of mine was full, and some of the organs had been so

much excited as to cause inflammation, which must be drawn off before there could be a different state of things. He said that some parts of my skull were very thick, and on my asking the cause of this, he said he thought it was an influence exerted upon me before my birth. Dr. Lathrop's instruction together with his humanity did me more good than a whole nation of such as Dr. Benedict, though he be Superintendent of the Lunatic Asylum. Dr. L. is the first and only physician that ever told me anything about my head that was of any benefit to me. He asked what injured me, and I told him—a combination of circumstances.

Before I left the Asylum, my head was in such a condition that I could find no relief except in screaming at the top of my voice a short time, so that the hot tears would pour out of my eyes—hot enough to scald them, so that they would smart just like any other burn; it injured them very much, but I could relieve them by the external application of cold water. They kept giving me cordial; but the feelings in my head, that caused that screaming, were beyond control; it was the circumstances which surrounded me which produced this state of things in my head. The Doctors in the institution did not try to remove the cause, and of course they would not, for they themselves were the cause, and they knew just enough to dabble with the effects.

Mrs. Tollis had charge of the ninth hall, where they kept me for a number of weeks before I left. She told me that she would get me away from there; and I answered that if she did not until I treated those Doctors politely, she never would; for to die was no disgrace—but to degrade myself by treating them fashionable brutes and murderers with respect, I never should leave this world with that load of guilt on my mind; and I never did treat them any better. A short time before my departure, Dr. Benedict was around with some of his blarney, and I very soon told him that he lied; perhaps he told that lie on purpose to see if I was any more humble. But not while I could draw one breath was I in fear of their punishment; although their treatment injured me, it was no punishment, for I had done nothing but simply act my part in the game.

"Honor and shame from no condition rise;  
Act well your part—there all the honor lies."

Although I played the game in rather an odd way, I did the best I could with what I had to do with.

This world never could make anything of me by putting me in low ground. Those that have an influence over me must allow their authority to be a scarce article. "You shall," and "You shall not," are but cyphers in my ears.

There was a Mrs. Boyce in the institution as a patient, who was a Yankee, with a head of a high order; and the lower class of attendants thought they could govern her also; but her motives were above theirs, as her head was higher than theirs. Their treatment of her and her disease caused her head to suffer in a manner similar to my own. She told me that there was no relief for her head but in screaming just as loud as she could scream; and the more noise she could make the better she felt. I know that same by my own experience. When the brain gets to just such a state as to press against the skull, the pain cannot be quietly endured for a single moment; there must be a reaction; but the influences that produced the disease cannot cure it; different influences and different circumstances only can effect a cure. As soon as Mrs. Boyce manifested that state of mind, Dr. Cook began to bark at her; but that only added fuel to the fire; she told him often that she could not help it, but it made no difference; he kept up his barking at her. At length, one day I heard a great racket; I was in the sixth hall—a very hard hall, too; who should make her appearance but Mrs. Boyce, screaming and squealing along, and "Bub" Cook tagging after her. After he went out of the hall, I thought I would take her in hand, for I was acquainted with her, and knew her disposition; I had listened to what "Bub" said to her, and it was only threats of sending her into a still worse hall if she did not stop her noise, but it made no difference for the better; the worse the halls that he might put her into, the more screaming she had to do, until her brain was relieved, and then she knew enough to stop, without "Bub" to tell her when. I met her in the ironing-room, after she got better, and she said that she owed her life to me for the assistance I had rendered her that day. The fact is, they did not know what to do for her, and they did not care; they did not study her feelings, but were determined to have their own will; there was a rush of blood to her brain and when that was relieved, there was no more trouble; the



Doctors imagined that she was "mad,"—that was their ignorance of the laws of mind. I presume that "Bub" had not read of any such case, and he thought it must be that she was ugly, and he would not bear it.

Now I can tell a worse story than that about myself, and a true one. I can tell when my head will not bear any more, and then if I can manage to get to one place, I do, on purpose to let the steam off my brain; that family knows enough to know what and where the trouble is, and what the remedy must be. The lady of the house told me once that I might have the best room in her house on purpose for the business. She said that I could make just as much noise as I had a mind to, and just as bad a one as I chose. The room was one good enough, in which to clear out the rubbish from my brain; it was her front parlor, the walls of which were lined with the paintings of her only daughter and only child, a beautiful sight for the eye to rest on; those paintings will tell the rising generations that such a woman had once lived, they will speak louder and longer than any obituary, although they are sometimes just. How many young ladies does Syracuse afford, who can cover their parlor walls with their own labor in the form of landscape paintings. I hope some of them will hereafter use their hands more and their tongues less. Was that family ever guilty of telling me what the low rabble said about me? No: they had something else to do besides listening to a lingo about Phebe Davis. The nature of a gossip is, not to say much unless encouraged in it. The old feelers go around to tell the neighbors what I am, and to see how strong their party is, and to pick up all the news that is out, to new-vamp the old with the new. It has come to be very much like the boy's old jack-knife; he said that he had got three new blades and four new handles, and it was the same old jack-knife still. But I should think that the boy would feel as though he had about lost sight of the original knife. I have thought the women must consider me just as good as new; for every little while they new-vamp me up, and I am the same being yet that I was when they first set me up for a shooting-mark, and I remain the most prominent character in a population of thirty-two thousand.

There is a family on Green street, that has had an active membership in the wolf-circle; both the old man and woman,

and even the son's wife, have been interested. But I am thinking they had insanity in earnest, in the nest of offspring. It is true, I did not hear anything about the case the first time Mrs. C. was in the institution, until after she had gone; but the second time that she was there she was a crib-patient, and of course she was on the sixth hall, which was the hall next to the one I was in. When I went into the dining-room I could hear her noise very plain, and knew who it was. I told the girls that she squealed worse than I did, and they asked me if I was not a little wicked; I told them that perhaps I was, but I had been crazy long enough to be wicked, and I meant to be. for I had their example, and that would make any body wicked; for they were a curious family; but their daughter died there; and I was asked what sort of a set they were, and answered that I thought her insanity was hereditary, for they all acted crazy to me. But, "Such measure as ye mete out to others, it shall be measured to you again." My sympathy, however, was all locked up at that time.

There was another young Miss, who was in the habit of retailing a little for my benefit, and who was taken from the evil to come. E. B. could ask if I was crazy. Her influence in society was about equal to the bite of an asp. She has peddled out a great deal of snake-in-the-grass lumber for me, and now it is my time to speak. She never was brought up to be useful in the world, neither was she originally blocked out for usefulness in life in any sphere whatever.

I begin to think that God is about taking up on my side, and I think it is about time that I had some help from some quarter; I am thankful for small favors, and hope I shall soon receive favors on a larger scale, for I have got about to the end of the path, and it is a long road that has no turn; but if I turn at all, it must be into an open lot, for the present, for I do not know a dollar bill from the leaf of an old almanac. I live in hopes of being restored to my senses; but it is no more strange that I should become idiotic, under the influences at Utica, than that others should. There was Charlotte Gleason, a young lady at the institution, who grew idiotic and died soon after. It was a great relief to hear that she was dead, for I had heard how she was treated under the care of Mary Reynolds. There is a law which protects cattle from treatment no worse than that which patients receive at the hands of the Catholic attendants

in that institution. Mary Reynolds is just fit to wait on the guillotine, or some slaughter-house. I have seen Henrietta Fullham drag Charlotte Gleason around the veranda by her hair, times without number, until she had but a trifle left on her head. Although Henrietta was a girl of generous impulses, she was as boisterous as a boatman. She was a Catholic, and could read her prayer-book, but could not write nor read writing. Mary Reynolds told me that on one occasion, before Charlotte became idiotic, her mother came to see her, and she was taken into the state parlor for that purpose; Mary said that when Charlotte saw her mother, the house fairly rung with her screams—they were enough to pierce the heart of a stone—and the words that she uttered were, “Oh, hell! oh, hell!” and then, “My dear mother, where did you come from?” Those screams and her language were an expression of her feelings. How well I can understand Charlotte’s feelings at that time.

I have seen Henrietta Fullham treat other patients in the same manner that she did Charlotte Gleason; it is a common occurrence, in the bad halls, to drag patients around by the hair, and pull their hair when combing it; to-be-sure, that latter cannot always be avoided, but I have often seen it done on purpose. Margaret Loudon was very kind to me, but when she combed the hair of patients in the morning, I did not wish to be present. Margaret was English, but a girl of very superior talent, though not cultivated. I once read of the death of a young lady, in consequence of putting up her hair in a manner different from her usual custom, and she lived but a short time after it. I would advise all who take their friends to the Asylum, to cut their hair very short indeed; it is much better for the patients to have their hair cut off short than to have it pulled out by the roots; if it is only shingled, or cut in the neck, it is more convenient for them to get a quick hold, than when it is put up with a comb; but a great many neglect or refuse to wear a comb, and such must look out for their hair; there is no preventive against the attendants making halts of the hair of patients, except by cutting it close to the head.

There was a Mrs. Truesdell there as a patient, on the ninth hall, when Catharine Gough had charge of it; and she would have remained there until doomsday, had there not occurred

a change of attendants and physicians. After the contemptible Dr. Cook left the house, Dr. Gray took his place, and he took Mrs. Truesdell off from the ninth and placed her in the sixth, a better hall, where I was at that time. I soon discovered that Mrs. T. was rather timid, and had been frightened nearly out of her senses. I thought I would try to approach her, and went to her door and rapped gently; at first she was very wild, and would start and tremble like a leaf, and get excited at everything, for her mind was in such a state that she could not help it, until different influences were exerted upon her and had worn it off. I continued calling upon her, but did not say much, and what I did say was with cautiousness; after a while I asked her to call on me—which she did, manifesting at first some fear, but as I made her welcome, and allowed her to look at my things, her timidity gradually wore off, and at length I gained her confidence. She told me that I was the first person that she had found in the house, with whom she could make friends. Hannah Nash had charge of the hall; she was a rather quiet, self-possessed, easy sort of body. Mrs. Truesdell improved, and soon went into a still better hall; in a few months she went home. But she told me that if Dr. Cook and the Irish help had not left, she should have gone with the rest of the raving patients. Old Ein Sayles broke out one of Mrs. T.'s teeth with a key, trying to pour medicine down her throat; the same was done in other cases. Mrs. T. told me that she one day asked Kate Gough to unlock a door for her, and Kate flew at her like a wild wolf, took hold of her hair near the temple, and jerked her down into a chair, and in a moment a lump as large as half of a hen's egg came on her temple; Kate was frightened, and got her into her room, and with a case-knife endeavored to put the protuberance back, and after a while it went away. It was such treatment that caused Mrs. T.'s extreme excitability of mind, while in the ninth hall. I often made her little presents from my work-box, and it was kindness that restored her to her reason and knowledge, independent of Dr. Benedict's skill. She had weak eyes, and when she went there she wore a pair of ear-jewels that had been left her by a deceased aunt, and valued at six dollars; her father purchased them and another pair, at a cost of ten dollars, as presents for his two sisters; and one of the sisters had left these to her niece, Mrs. T., who would not have taken ten dol-

lars for them ; she told me that Catharine Gough and Henrietta Fullham took them out of her ears, Kate saying she would take them to the office ; Mrs. T. said that she afterward asked Dr. Gray for them, and he answered that there was no such jewelry there ; she had hopes of recovering them some time, but I presume they were taken care of as my things were. It is not safe to take either good clothes, or money, or jewelry there.

I put some flannel into the wash one week, and it was just seven weeks before I got it back. I told a lady at the table, one day, in the presence of Sally Richards—who had charge of the hall at the time—that when the attendants went home I intended to have them searched ; that afternoon I went down into the fine ironing-room, and on my return I found the flannel in my room. I had given Sally no peace after the first week, for I knew that was the only way to get back my flannel.

I will give the outlines of Mrs. Chatfield's treatment at the hands of Catharine Gough and Henrietta Fullham. Certainly Mrs. C. was a troublesome patient, but none the less so for their scolding her half to death. She told me that every time she was bathed, they took a broom and scrubbed her just as they did the hall ; and they let water run into her face and into her ears, and on her feet, not exactly hot enough to burn or blister, but warm enough to make her face and hands feel very uncomfortable ; she said it would smart worse than a blister ; and they would both get hold of her when she was in the bathing-trough, and jam her head against one end and her feet against the other. It was necessary for her to wear some of the time what they call a waist, and she said that once, while Kate was putting on her waist, she (Mrs. C.) happened to resist a little, when Kate got mad and bent back her hand so far that in a moment it was nearly as large as two hands, and for a time she thought her wrist was broken ; she cried, and Kate was so frightened that she went into the dining-room and got some sugar and offered it to her if she would stop crying. I asked her why she did not tell the doctor ; she said that her mind was just like a little child's, and they knew it—and they would first abuse her and then coax her with a lump of sugar. She was a Yankee, and they were both Catholics. But these are only a few prominent circumstances out of a year's train of



abuses. Mrs. Chatfield was a very interesting person, and that called out their envious feelings.

What I did not know of the Catholics before, I found out while I was at Utica. They hated the sight of Sarah Stout and Mrs. Mars, because they were educated, interesting and delicate. I have seen those great overgrown Irish girls jerk Sarah Stout's hair on purpose, when combing it, and it appeared to add to their happiness. It made them mad to hear those crazy patients say things which they themselves could not think of. I once saw Mary Reynolds strike Mrs. Hannah Gifford in the face with her fist, and her nose bled a stream; Mary wet a cloth and held it to Mrs. G.'s face, and, looking at me, said she had cut her lip with her tooth; but my eyes were worth forty such lies. I labeled Miss "Madam Mary," and thought to myself I would put that act of hers on paper. I would as lief that my nose should come in contact with a steam-engine as with one of those great Irish fists which the patients are but too familiar with in that house. Mrs. Gifford was a Quakeress, from the society near Rochester. I thought I had heard profanity before, but when Mary struck Mrs. G., I took a new lesson. Her temperament was just as fine as No. 100, and what she could not think of, nobody could. She was a very crazy woman, and had on a leather muff at the time Mary struck her.

I do not pretend to tell all that I saw there, for it cannot be told; but I select a few prominent circumstances, and give the particulars as minutely as possible; that will enable people to draw their own inferences; thinking persons, and such as understand character, will know that if these are but the outlines, the filling up must be equal to it. In truth, it is the case; but after reading and believing it—for it is every word true—the world will still remain in darkness on the subject; as the managers of the establishment aim to do their worst deeds out of sight. The help in the institution rather thought that I should never leave there alive; but, most of the time, I thought I should.

When I was in the sixth hall Frances Reed told me that she was very much afraid that Margaret Loudon would break the patients' limbs in handling them so rough; and she said they sometimes showed marks of violence to the doctors. I said, "What then?" "Oh," said she, "I tell the doctors that they

hurt each other." Although Frances Reed was very humane to me, after she got acquainted with me, she was not fit for that place. I thought strange of her telling me what she did; but if I had given them my opinion in every respect, they never would have told me half as much as they did—I never should have left there alive, and these facts would have been buried with me and lost to the world. In order to secure them, I had to use a little policy; for a patient that even told the doctors too much, must look out for her life there.

There was another old black hobgoblin of a grass widow of a thing, from Syracuse, in the shape of a hired help; her name was Carey; she made it her business to dictate to the help in the hall where I was when I left; but I told them all that I had read the rule-book, and I had the same right to good tea and coffee and milk that they had, and it silenced the fuss. I was interrogated about the rule-book, as to who let me see it; I told them it was not for me to tell, but for them to find out, if they could.

Mrs. Hollis allowed me to go into the dining-room every morning and night and prepare my own tea and coffee. Miss Sarah Sharts and Miss Gwen Owens were on the ninth hall with Mrs. Hollis, with whom I fared very well. Mrs. Hollis was English, Sarah Sharts an American, Gwen Owens was Welsh, and Madam Carey an American. Sarah Owens was on the sixth hall; she was a real little lady, and a warm friend of mine; she was quite intelligent, and Gwen was a very fine scholar. As far as living was concerned, in the basement—Mrs. Maloy was first help in the hall, and Mr. Maloy was in the kitchen that cooked for the basement; of course the other girls fared as Mrs. Maloy did—and that was well enough; he gave them baked apples and a plenty of cream and sugar to eat on them; at the same meals, all of the patients drank skimmed milk in their tea and coffee, except Harriet Becker, who was allowed to fare with them because she would help them do their work. And it was about so in all the halls; the patients had to buy favors; but I would not do it; my board was paid for, and I would not pay for it the second time by doing what others were paid for doing; for it was not worth to me one-quarter what the county paid for it, and not much of my labor went for that old dry fodder. Mr. Maloy

would cook very nice dishes for his wife, and quite extra dishes, too. There were some of the greatest ladies in the house present at some of these meals, and they knew these things. There was Catharine Clark, also, to look on and see these things; and it is no wonder she was a fighter; she was educated, and the tone of her feelings was high and fine; they had much rather she would keep her fingers out of their hair. She was an American. It is the fine spun who will fight the more gross minds, who make up the majority. They feel right enough, and there is nothing for them to fight for. There is Miss Caroline Bull, from Canandaigua. She was a goddess; her nature was divine—truly so, indeed; but she was a fighter, and she was educated. Her nature was as fine as California gold, and her language was very select and beautiful; but she would put her foot against a window, and the sash and all was nothing in her way. She said she would not have such work. She was an American. I left her in No. 11. When I was in the sixth hall, Miss Bull was there a long time. One day I saw her sitting on the floor weeping very much, and I asked her what the matter was. "Well," said she, "I will tell you." She said that her American friends had thrown her in there with the low Irish, and there was no one to care for her. She said it was enough to destroy any one, and that was the case. She had been there for four years, and Kate Clark much longer. At the time that Miss Bull was feeling so bad, there were some of the most disagreeable, old, filthy, vulgar Irish and Canadians whom I ever met with in my life. There they are, and their manners and habits are such that it is truly disgusting to sit at the same table with them, saying nothing of the vermin that inhabit their heads, for they are so numerous that I should not know what to say, and they are nearly as large as fowls. I think they must be the Shanghai breed. All of that rabble will always take hold of the milk pitcher by the spout, and stick enough of their claws into the pitcher to fill it up, and then all must drink milk in their tea after their filthy hands. I told them to take hold of the handle of the pitcher, and Delia McKendrick thought I meant to quarrel with them, for she did not appreciate my motive. Although she was employed there as an attendant, she had all of the dirty habits that were disgusting to a person of cleanly habits. I should like to know how many of the white plums the patients got

out of what Mrs. B., of Utica, carried there for them, that were left in Delia McKendrick's care; and I would advise those who send boxes to the patients not to send much at a time, unless they wish the hired help to share with the patients.

Some of the patients on the best halls are capable of taking care of their own things, but Sarah Stout was not, and when she received a box, it was a generous one, and she was generous too, and that was enough. I profess to know what I saw, and I am thinking that she got what the help did not want. She was on the fourth hall, and there was one girl who had charge of the fine ironing room who roomed in the fourth hall, and she always made bold to help herself to whatever she chose. I do think it the height of impudence for one person to use another's combs and brush—certainly without permission; but Mary F. would do that, and rummage the attendants' rooms all over to find them. That was not all. The young lady to whom the combs and brush belonged told me that she found vermin in her brush, and that she had to send to the lodge and pay one dollar for a box to lock up her combs and brush in. The young lady had been a patient and was then an attendant, and she was obliged to room with just such as there were in the hall. She was an American, and Mary F. was a Catholic. The latter had so much destructiveness, that it was a pleasure to her to hurt any one; and they had one great moose of an Irish thing a short time, that the girls told me had been in close confinement a number of days for fighting; I had heard her one day threaten to beat a patient and say that she would soon have them all in the hospital; this was not because they had done anything, but because of her own destructiveness; she would grow fat on fighting, but it made the patient perfectly wild, for she was an American, and had a very fine mind, and her temperament was as fine as her mind. The great mastodon, like some others in the house, would like to massacre all of the Americans in the house and out of doors to. But having the insane in their power to a certain extent, one could see what there was in them, and we shall see, to our sorrow when it is too late. But I have one consolation; when Catholicism rules, not only the working class and the poor will suffer, but the rich will fare no better than the poor. If the Americans are such fools as to elect the Irish to office, and make them a pres-



ent of our American government, as a voluntary act, they will sooner or later suffer the consequences, and much sooner than people in general imagine. But those that dance must pay the fiddler.

There was a great go-between of an Irish thing in the institution when I went there; she was in Number 11, and they kept her as long as she would stay. When I was in the basement, Mary Olin told me that she went there before Agnes Kelly went away, and that Agnes was a real old hyena; Mary Olin said she wished that I could have seen the waists and bodies of the patients in the basement, where Agnes Kelly had punched them with a broomstick; their body bruises could not be seen, they could not show them to the Doctors; Mary said it was a sight to behold when they were bathed. I know Agnes to be an awful creature; and I have seen Mrs. Maloy do the same acts to the patients when I was in the basement, and no occasion for it. There was an old Dutch woman there whom they treated in that way. Now, a broomstick jammed in violently among one's ribs, by a great two-listed person, I think would not feel as though done by a Christian; if so, let some stout man try it on your delicate frame a few times, and perhaps it would be a rarity that you would relish right well. Mary Reynolds was a tasty little thing of about two hundred pounds weight, and she could use the patients' ribs as a substitute for fiddle-strings, and the broom-handle as a substitute for the fiddle-bow; she and Agnes could both play the same tune, and were so familiar with the old broomstick tune that although they had no notes they could keep good time.

They have got another place of punishment in the basement that is interesting to strangers or the relatives of the insane—a place to smother them. It is between a double partition, and they cannot breathe in there but a few moments. I cannot say that a patient was ever found dead in there, but I can say that there is no safety in having such a place in the house, especially where the Catholics are employed as attendants, and not much more with the Americans; and if they cannot be trusted to have the care of the insane, who can? It is a simple fact altogether to know, that anything and everything that works out in kitchens and factories are not qualified to have the care of the insane.

There was one of the hired help who threatened to take the life of another. Mary O'Donald told Harriet Clark that she



would surely kill her if she found her alone. I heard Harriet tell Mary Farrell of it in the fine ironing room; and if a patient was getting well whom they had abused every way, they would all set in and blarney her up before she left, to eradicate by-gone impressions or ill treatment, for the attendants have told me so, and I saw it too. Old Ag. Kelly made an impression on Miss Chamberlain's face by throwing her on the floor, that was not eradicated short of three weeks. This I had from Mrs. Maloy. Miss C. was a patient from Binghamton, was wealthy, and knew nothing about being subjected to the authority of such loafers as old Ag. Kelly. Such cattle were often told what they were by patients who were in No. 11. They all tried to make her rational by brute force; but she was a Yankee. That snake of a Doctor, Cook, did his best; but at length the little boy had to give it up with the rest. They all pursued a different course with her. She left off that raving, but it hurt them to coax her, and the doctors took her out of the basement. Mrs. Maloy said that the doctors went into the hall about the time that old Ag. pitched battle, and Miss Chamberlain told them she was afraid some of her ribs were broken, but the doctors thought they were not, though injured, for old Ag. knelt down on her and bore her whole weight. If the old saying is true that sin is heavy, old Ag. had enough of it in her to break the ribs of an old whale, and I should think a woman of common size would cave in under her heft. Mrs. Maloy said that Miss C. stated she would murder Agnes if she could get hold of her, or else she would be murdered. Old Agnes did not dare go through the third hall when Miss C. was there; and Mrs. Willets told old Ag. that she would advise her to go and settle the matter before Miss Chamberlain left, for she was very much afraid it would injure the house, certainly if it should be published. The reputation of the house is the first consideration, and not the welfare of the patients. If there is anything likely to get out, the leaks are soon calked in a hurry. I heard that Miss C. had a brother call to see her, to whom she told the story, and he spoke to Dr. Benedict about it. Dr. B. told him a smooth story, and said that it was necessary to have such help in the house. He dealt out a lingo of his double-tongued hypocrisy, and got over that fracas the best way he could. I took notes while there. My work-box cover was written full. I wrote it so

that no one could read it but myself, and the cute things were written on the underside of it. When I returned to Syracuse I copied my notes, and what my work-box would not hold my head did, and the old box, and head too, are the places from which I now take extracts.

"The Lord saith, vengeance is mine, and I will repay it." God is divine, but we are human, and "it is human to err, but divine to forgive." God does not feel disposed to forgive them until He gets revenge, and that is time enough. It is just as right for me to try to get revenge on the old hut as it is that God should on all. We have Him for an example. I never heard any of the attendants say that they would be willing to have a friend of theirs taken there; and I once asked one of them if they thought that Dr. Benedict would be willing to turn his wife in there with all the rabble in the house, if she should be just as crazy as the No. 11 patients? "Oh, no! for Dr. Gray would feel quite as bad as Dr. Benedict, and she would be doubly provided for."

I wonder if Dr. Benedict would like to have two of the attendants take hold of his wife's arms and twist them as I have seen them twist the patients? They begin rather moderate, and twist them as long as they dare to. They made a real business of it. I have heard them say to each other, "Now let's go and give them a real twisting, and pull their hair well;" and I thought the graceful twisters must have made ropes for a living previous to their going there, for they had the trade so perfect.

I wonder if Dr. Benedict would like to have old Em Sayles pinch his wife as I saw her pinch a patient one day. Both of her arms were as black as bruises could make them in spots. She showed them to Mrs. Willets, and she said a wash ought to be prepared for them; and then old Em told folks that the patient pinched herself; but I saw it all, and I saw where Em took hold of the patient. I saw her arms in two moments after they were pinched, and the patient was not out of my sight at all after it was done until I saw her take her dress off. I looked at her arm, and Dr. Benedict was so mad because the patient told him of it, that he gave her a very spiteful push, and put her in the sixth hall. The doctor told Frances Reed that there was a patient who had been behaving very bad, and she could stay there for awhile. That was his polite way of telling

the help that they could treat a patient just as bad as they chose ; and if he wished to favor patients he would tell the help that they must do the best they could with them, and they were often treated very different. They understood each other. The pinching was to be seen at the end of eighteen days. I once saw Dr. Benedict do the same act. He got mad at a patient, and he flew at her. She had on a single plaid shawl, and he left marks on her arms. There was one thickness of cotton cloth, one of calico, and two of the woolen shawl. He manifested just as much violence for a short time as any raving maniac whom I saw in the institution. The scene reminded me of an old turkey that got mad at me once for wearing a red shawl. It appears they have an antipathy against red, and I was once standing in a yard where there was a large flock of turkeys, when the first I knew out flew an old turkey from the drove and gave me a nip about the shoulders, and then retired again with his dignity ; and notwithstanding that the patient's arms were so horribly hurt and bruised, I thought it best to tell the old turkey story once in awhile to counteract the impression that such an awful scene made in the hall. Mrs. Maloy, Mary Reynolds and Mary Olin were all present at the exhibition. As interesting as it was, the doctor might have given out a notice in some daily paper, and I presume there would have been a large audience from Utica, and perhaps enough tickets sold to pay the trouble, for I can tell you such a scene presents a very pleasing spectacle, and also a very rare one to the public. It is well worthy of description, but my descriptive powers are not very active, not as much so as my thinking apparatus at present. I believe he had her taken into one of the already perfumed cells in No. 12—that is the highest degree in the lodge—but I could have told them that a stench of that kind would not cure insanity, for I had had a summer's experience the season previous to my going to the institution, and I thought it made me more raving if possible.

The family in whose house I lived when I went to Utica furnished me with a variety of odors, but all to no effect.

Dr. Gray undertook to make me polite to him, but did he do it? That is another thing. The doctors did not merit politeness from me, neither did any of them get it. After I got in the basement I cleared all the rubbish out of my brain in just such language as harmonized with the treatment I received

from them, and I presume they appreciated my conversational powers, and also the unusually select flow of language I had acquired by mingling with refined society, and likewise my exquisite taste in dress. The finishing touch must have been my graceful deportment and suavity of manners. I presume they regretted my departure, but I reluctantly tore myself away from the sacred spot.

When Madame Kellogg was there as a patient, she said that there was a lady in the institution who had been there a long time, and who was irrecoverable, but she was a pay patient and a very interesting woman. She was on a good hall. Her children lived a great distance from Utica and did not see her often. They dressed her nice, and Dr. Brigham was anxious to have her stay, for they liked such patients in the house. When a stranger went into the house, the doctor would introduce the visitor to that lady, (name forgotten.) She was a little bewildered and not in a state of mind to speak for herself, and Dr. Brigham always told her friends that she was contented there. There she was, and no one to speak for her; but at length another patient who was more capable saw the daughter alone a moment, to whom she whispered and told her to take her mother home with her, with which request she complied. She was careful, however, and not let it be known to the doctor, for such things will not do there. It is dangerous even for one patient to interest herself in the welfare of another patient unless it is a benefit to the house. I once told a patient that she was sewing too much, and the help was present. I never thought of giving offense, for I had not been there long enough to learn but what the doctors thought more of curing the patients than getting their labor, but one of the patients told me it would never do. I told her it would do, for I would not see a patient injure herself with work in that place without telling her of it; for they are often told that when they can work all the time they will soon go home, and a great many that I saw injured themselves by over-doing. The woman that I spoke to had been in the basement, and her clothes were all torn off from her; she was sewing just as fast as her fingers could fly, and her face was colorless; she had left five small children at home, one an infant, that I thought must need a mother's care; her name I have forgotten, but her husband was a saddler by trade—a Dutchman; she was an



American; and I thought that her private family had stronger claims upon her labor than a State institution.

A Mrs. Freeman told me that she took care of a Mrs. Weaver, who was very sick with the summer complaint on the fourth hall; they were both patients; but Mrs. Weaver told Mrs. F. to ask the doctor if she could not take care of her, for if she did not she surely would not live. Mrs. Freeman said that there were more who died for the want of nursing than from disease. The amiable Miss Kellogg had charge of the hall, and Mrs. Freeman told me that when the doctors were going into the hall Miss Kellogg would push her away from the bed to take the credit to herself for the nursing. She was careful to stand by the bed when Dr. Cook was present, and as careful to do the pushing when he did not see her, as she was to be standing by the sick-bed of a patient. The poet says that "Life is all a fleeting show;" but Longfellow says that "Life is real—life is earnest."

There was Mrs. Strong's case; I think she was from Buffalo; she had a son who was a physician; but she died in the institution—and how did she die? It is true, she was taken into the third hall to die; but she was kept with the brutes until they all knew that there was no help for her—and then she was very kindly taken into the third hall, but not until death had given her a cheek clear through. Many a patient got her clearance in that place. I have often seen them taken away in an old one-horse wagon, going around the back way, and then off again, with an old blanket or buffalo robe thrown over the box that housed the patient's remains; and it rather added to my happiness to know that one had done suffering.

A few days before old Mrs. Strong died, her son (the doctor) was there to see her; when he got there, Dr. Cook went into the hall and told Frances Reed to make ready, for Dr. Strong would soon be in to see his mother. Frances flew around and got things in order, so that no one could see, but what Mrs. Strong had had the best of nursing; but, to my certain knowledge, that woman had no more care than cattle have, nor half as much as the most of cattle have; her head was low, and her mouth not exactly closed, but I never saw Frances raise her hand at all to give her drink; if she swallowed, well and good—if not, it was just as well. Frances told me that



the patients had nearly killed her in the ninth hall ; her hands were fettered with a leather muff, and the rest of the patients would fight her, and Catharine Gough would allow it and laugh at it—she enjoyed fighting. When Dr. Strong went away, he thanked Frances for her kindness to his mother, and told her he was very thankful his mother had fallen into such good hands ! After the doctor had gone, it was disgusting to see the wicked Frances glory in the deception she had practiced upon Dr. S. She said that he went away feeling well about his mother,—“And,” said she, “did I not do it up right, to blarney him up so good ?” She said that he thought all was gold that glittered. “The heart and head are deceitful and desperately wicked.” If ever I saw that saying verified, it was in that insane institution.

There is Mrs. B.’s case, also, which I feel disposed to speak of for the benefit of the public. She was from Utica, a patient in the institution a short time, and although she was very insane, I could see that her composition was fine. She was one of the few diamonds that are almost lost among the great mass of chaos ; but, however, if her nature is not appreciated and her merits rewarded in this sphere of action, they will not be lost in another still higher sphere—and the time is not far distant when we shall all cut loose from crazy houses, and straps, and belts, and waists, and muffs, and mits, and cribs, and bed-straps, and twisting of arms, and smothering huts, and drowning. Deity must appreciate all of these tasty articles and maneuvers.

Mrs. B. did not get any better in Utica, and if her friends had lived at a distance she would have died there ; but Mr. B. is a lawyer and rather wide awake ; he kept his eye on her, and when he saw that she was failing, he took her to Hartford, in Connecticut, and in a few months more she was at home well. She afterward visited the Utica Asylum, and I had a little conversation with her respecting her treatment in the Hartford institution. She told me that the doctors and attendants at Hartford were not near so kind as those at Utica. I told her it was because she was so near home at Utica, and that they had only affected kindness in her presence. She thought not ; but I had looked on and witnessed the deception they used in her case to prevent her seeing and knowing what I already had seen and knew. Dr. Benedict let her have Eliza

Chapin for her private attendant; and she was very smooth, but her composition was a perfect specimen of deception. Dr. Benedict knew that, and he wanted Mrs. B. to speak well of the house. She told me that the doctor in Hartford would have fixed insanity upon her again, after she had once got perfectly well, if it had not been for a cousin of hers that called there to see her, and to whom she explained her case, on which he at once despatched a note to her husband, who forthwith came to Hartford. She said that was the only circumstance that prevented her mind from becoming a wreck. It is high time these things were thought of. They do not make any arrangements to prevent insanity, but are making broad calculations for just so many crazy folks in the world, and they will have them—just as they did witches in Salem. I believe that witchcraft had its origin in a priest's family, and it did not subside until they had hung a few of the ringleaders; there was not much fun in their witchcraft when the gallows threatened them; a rope did not look quite as genteel as a white cravat about the neck. The more iniquity there is in a person's mind, the more tenacious he will be of his sectarian rights; the more corrupt minds will hold the old priest by the bit, while the more pure will mow them all down together, and say amen to it, for they are but walking shadows.

There was a carman, an honest man, who died in the city last winter, whose death was a loss to the community, but there was no fashionable obituary strung out in the papers by old Priest May. I have reason to notice his death, however, for I appreciate his merits; he was industrious, and by his industry and frugality he provided a permanent residence for his family; his merits spoke loud in his praise while he lived, and there was less use for a tall overgrown monument to speak of his qualities after his death than for such as are cyphers in the world, and can only be remembered by the hand of the engraver. His name was Charles Harrison. I have reason to respect him, for his house was my home a part of one winter; and although he was very poor at that time, and had to run in debt for his provisions, he told his wife to have me stay there until I could do better. I then had a very good supply of clothing, and I did not forget Mrs. H.

But Priest May knew the best place for his better half when she was crazy. D. W., of Syracuse, told me, some years ago,

to travel if I could ; but it costs me something to travel. I did visit my friends in Vermont ; but it injured me more to sew for the money that I spent in going and coming than the journey benefited me. It took me months to earn what I spent in eight days ; I had made dresses, with the strength obtained from compound morphine pills ; and the first work that I was able to do, after my return, paid the doctor three dollars for the right to my life long enough to see my native home once more—and the price was cheap enough. But did Mrs. May have to labor so ? By no means. The priest is supported for two or three hours of silly talk each week ; and if I could get my pay as well accordingly, for the common sense that I have talked, as he does for nonsense, I should be able to travel when and where I please.

While I was at Utica, a number of very respectable acquaintances of mine called there to see me, but could not. One day Dr. Benedict said that Mr. Hoxie, of Syracuse had called, and I could go down into the state parlor and see him ; I was ready in five minutes ; but Dr. Gray went into the hall, and I could not get Eliza Chapin to unlock the door for me until it was too late. He was a business man, and had to go out with the cars ; I suppose that Dr. Gray had put a veto on the plan ; Eliza kept saying, " In a moment ; " and of course they knew what time the cars went out. Such facts belong with the rest of the plans of the house.

There was a lady there as a patient who was a friend of mine, and understood my case ; she was educated and understood character—had been a teacher, and was keen ; she advised me not to let Dr. Benedict know that I was taking notes for this pamphlet, " for," said she, " you never will get out alive." Miss C. is all I say. She looked like a queen, and there was mental aristocracy. She helped me along a little. Miss Harriet Nelson also contributed a large share to my happiness by the manifestation of her good will in a note that she sent me by Dr. Cook. She was compelled to do penance for simply telling Dr. Gray that she was as good as himself or the hired help, and such like small talk. They all wish the patients to feel very inferior to all in the house, and they are not allowed to act as men and women, but as though they were in the capacity of servants in the kitchen. I wonder if God has ever compelled Dr. Brigham to do penance for telling Dr.

Nichols to go around and hold the patients' heads under the faucet and let the water run on them just as long as he dared to, and after allowing them to breathe, repeat the same, to compel them to work. This I was told by one of the attendants.

There was old Mrs. Swift, a victim of fear. She was a natural lady, and rather timid. She told me the cause of her fear, and her very looks told me that she said the truth. She said she had been fighting a little for Christ's sake. She was honest in it; she thought if she tore her clothes it was for Christ's sake, and if she had a fight, it was for Christ's sake—and I suppose Dr. Nichols thought he would cut her finger-nails for Christ's sake. She said that he went into the hall one day and took hold of her and threw her down on the floor, and told one of the girls to take her cap off, and he then took his knife out of his pocket and cut every one of her finger-nails so close that they bled a little, and she had the sorest fingers that she ever had in her life; she thought he was going to kill her when he first took his knife from his pocket; he was a large man, and she said that he knelt down on her in such a manner as to stop her breath for some time. She said that such thunderbolts as they had there were enough to frighten anybody to death. In a short time she was wild. She was an American.

The first winter that I was in the house, I was in the second hall a part of the time, when Laura Capen had charge of it. I took notice that if I treated the patients with even common civility, they were very grateful for it, and for every trifle they failed not to thank me. There was a lady from New York, who had been there some time, of whom I asked the cause of the patients' partiality for me, and she said it was because I always dealt with them as human beings, and not as though they were mere cattle; and that they had not been accustomed to such kind treatment in the institution. Laura Capen was only fit for a street commissioner or some worse occupation; and if the patients had one kind word from any person, they dwelt upon it for a long time.

Mrs. Masscraft went away from there a raving maniac. I have not the ability to do justice to her native talent and lady-like deportment; the two qualities, together with her education, made her a finished woman—not exactly a unique in this world,



but a next-door neighbor. She was of Yankee family. Helen Newell left there a perfect wreck in mind; and Miss Pepper likewise. Mrs. Rowe was still there when I left, and a hopeless case. They were all brilliants, and of Yankee origin. These are only a few amongst the many.

I would like to say a word about the Idiot institution they are about to construct in Syracuse. But it is not popular to listen to what any person has to say, unless he or she have a great purse full of money. A great money-purse is a very influential member of society—highly intellectual, and full of ideas.

I should like to know how Dr. Benedict smoothed over the case of Miss Lewis, who died in the Asylum. She was from Geneva, educated and interesting, and I should think she had always been a pet in her family. She was in the sixth hall, and a rather troublesome patient. One night she was found by the night-watch dead upon the floor of her room. Frances Reed told me that she knew she was dying when she went to bed; and she had taken her from the dormitory and put her in a single room, and locked her in to die all alone. She got up in the night and spoke to Henrietta Fulham, but Frances would not allow Henrietta to get up, and I suppose the poor creature was unable to get back to her bed. I asked Frances why she did not call the Doctors, and she said they had all gone to the city to attend a medical lecture. Miss Lewis was a cripple; her days were shortened at Utica; she was jammed about there, and although she had a good supply of clothing, she was not allowed enough of it to keep herself comfortable. She was a frail creature, and easy to kill.

There was a Miss Phillips, a cripple, who one day in her craziness tore some cheap bedding to pieces. It was cold the following night—for I had a spread and one blanket on my bed, which was not sufficient covering, and I had the girls bring me another blanket. To punish Miss Phillips for tearing her bedding, Dr. B. told old Em Sayles to take everything out of Miss P.'s room except what clothes she had on; I saw the bed and bedding on the floor in the morning, and Miss P. told me how she had suffered during the night; her eyes flashed fire as she told me. Of course, after such treatment, she left the institution as crazy as when she went there.

Dr. Benedict must be a well read physician, but he is not



very successful in his practice. He has no skill in curing; but the art of killing he is very familiar with.

I will now speak in behalf of Mrs. Alvord, of Salina. I hope I am doing right, and I think I am; and it is necessary that some one should do right, by informing her friends that she is in the most isolated and miserable condition that a human being can be placed in this side of the grave. I knew her when she was the young bride of Mr. Thomas Alvord, and her society was courted by all; but now she is an unfortunate inmate of a Lunatic Asylum. To contrast her situation in early life with the present, together with the fare that the institution affords, is enough to petrify the heart's blood. If patients are neglected by the friends or relatives who send them there, they will soon be treated as though they had no right to existence; and it would be a mercy to all such to behead them at once. I hope that Mr. A. will not forget to see Mrs. A. often; for I think that she has claims upon him still as a protector. She is spoken to by the low and groveling hired help as though she was their little chore-girl that they had taken out of pity. She goes at their calling, and comes at their bidding; and when they speak to her she will start as though she dared not disobey their orders. She has become perfectly servile to the hired help of the place.

If our Americans place their insane within the reach of such influences, they must expect the consequences to be terrible. What lady is there in the world that would be willing to hire a low-bred Irish girl into her house and be subject to her authority, and the house locked up and the girl have the keys, with no one to interfere? How would that lady look at the end of five years?

I would simply say to the public that I have thought of enlarging this edition, but my limited means will not allow me to do so. But I will suggest one idea which perhaps will not be lost to the world. I profess to have had a little experience in the insane institution in Utica, and I think it would be a very benevolent act to build an institution for the few that are not insane; for they are so very few that it would be much less expense to fence in a small portion of old mother earth for a kind of protection for those that are unfortunate enough to inherit common sense. Allowing myself to be the judge, I did not see but three individuals in the institution that I called ra-

tional on all points. The three were Dr. Porter and Mr. Rhoades and a young man named Squires, and they were all relatives, and all from Skaneateles, if I recollect right, and every patient in the house respected them. Mr. Rhoades was employed in the capacity of first steward, and Mr. Squires as an attendant in the gentlemen's apartment. I think it a very great privilege to find some good traits of character in the vicious Dr. Benedict did make some improvements in the house; he thought it very improper to employ men as attendants for the ladies. I think it a high note that it ever should have been the case. There is a class of incurable patients in the institution that have been there a long time, that are capable of retaining a great many facts relative to the by-gone treatment of the house; it was from such minds that I derived the most reliable knowledge in regard to the former proceedings in the house, and very much too that cannot be published. Dr. Gray is a beautiful character to superintend that institution; I have not told it all yet. Them devils did not like the idea of my leaving that place alive, rightly named hell. But three times while I was there it proved to be the case that my head found relief by the uncapping of a small blood vessel in the old rickety thing. I can tell community that if all murders were recognized by law there would be a thinning out of old cast-iron saints. I view these every-day indirect murders doubly criminal, compared with one wholesale rowdy out-of-the-way off-hand murder; the sooner done the less suffering. And that is not all, it looks more workman-like. But never mind, Sammy May can't come paddy over me yet. I wonder how many straight jackets Sammy will have when the ladies throw them by; perhaps he will open a clothing store. And I would also notify the public that a slaughter house can be got up on a much cheaper plan; butchers can be employed in that place much cheaper than Doctors, and I think it the best plan to employ some butcher in the house. And I am thinking if Myron H. Clark could have two years' experience in that institution he would think it more advisable to demolish those that are already built than to introduce the plan of erecting another such a fashionable butchers' shop. If I recollect right, friend Myron did not forget the insane in his message, but he has not had experience in a hotel of that kind; but I think he was honest, therefore I will take the liberty to furnish him with a copy

of this work, and then perhaps he will reason and allow conscience to dictate.

I have more to say when the public are prepared to listen to it.

MR. MYRON H. CLARK :—Sir—You have not looked behind the scenes in the Utica Lunatic Asylum. It is my misfortune to be one of the impressible beings of the age, and if there is vice going on in the atmosphere around me I always know it ; and I also knew there was vice in that house the first night I was there, as well as I did the day I left. And the world may rely on the fact, the old crazy house in Utica is rather a chilly affair and no mistake about it.

But after all that, I wonder who paid for the molasses that I made into candy in the fine ironing room, and Lord Benedict never caught me at it neither.

I have done for the present.

1. The first part of the document is a letter from the President of the United States to the Congress, dated January 3, 1801. It is a very important document, as it contains the President's first message to the Congress. The letter is written in a very formal and dignified style, and it is a very good example of the President's power and authority. The letter is divided into several paragraphs, and it covers a wide range of topics, including the state of the Union, the President's actions, and the President's plans for the future. The letter is a very important document, and it is a very good example of the President's power and authority.

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## THOUGHTS OF A PATIENT,

Suggested by hearing Dr. C. say, "You'll soon be well again."

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When shall it be?

In spring, when sleeping flowers awake,  
And streams their icy fetters break,  
And zephyrs gay unfold their wings,  
And vernal sweetness 'round earth clings;  
When nature's tones, I loved so well,  
Around my moss-clad cottage swell:

Then!—then will I be well!

When shall it be?

Is it when 'round my parents' hearth  
Are mingled former tones of mirth,  
And when no voice of grief is heard,  
Nor is a sound of sadness stirred,  
Save one short word, in sorrow, tell  
An absent one remembered well:

Then!—then shall I be well!

When shall it be?

When sunny hopes no more sustain  
An aged mother's tot'ring frame,  
And reason's fled her active brain,  
And grief a manly brother slain;  
When Death has moved my sister home,  
When all I've loved, but self, are gone:

Then!—then will I be well!

I shall be well!

I know—when Earth has loosed her claims,  
And naught that animates remains,  
And the soul, that God to Earth hath lent,  
Backward to Heaven its course hath bent—  
And when around my new-made tomb  
Is breathed affection's farewell moan—

Yes!—then I shall be well!